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Precarious struggle toward unity

John Valk

NIEUWEGEIN, The Netherlands — It has been forty years since Klaas Schilder and his *Vrygemaakte* followers were forced to leave the Gereformeerde Kerken. That *Dolle Dinsdag*, as it came to be known, occurred in the midst of the Second World War. The turbulence found at the battle front could also be found at the Gereformeerde Synodical front. By proclaiming his Act of Liberation, Schilder in effect declared that "War or no war, the Truth marches on."

Nineteen eighty-four also marks the 150th anniversary of the Secession of 1834. A museum display later this fall in Utrecht, and numerous books and articles are commemorating those events which led to the first major schism in the Reformed movement in Holland.

The church regroups

While 1984 commemorates on the one hand a past marked with church splits, it is encouraging on the other hand to observe a present tendency toward church regrouping. The foreseeable future will not, of course, yield a unified church situation similar to that of pre-1834. Too much doctrinal (and cultural) water has gone under too many ecclesiastical bridges of yesteryear.

Nonetheless, efforts at the ecclesiastical front today reveal a desire by a significant number to reverse the trends of the past. Emerging are attempts to minimize differences and maximize similarities. Mute points of former doctrinal squabblings appear to fade in the face of present ecumenical inclinations.

Today the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken (the church of the Secession-1834 that did not join others in forming the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland) and the Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken (NGK), (those *buiten verband* who separated from the *Vrijgemaakte Kerk* in 1967) have moved closer together. They now hold ecumenical services, share church facilities, exchange pulpit supply, and, where the situation necessitates, even unite to form new congregations.

Traveling together

Better known is the proposed union between the Hervormde Kerk and the Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland (GKN). This is to take place sometime in 1986, a short 100 years after intolerable differences drove them apart. Today the differences themselves are considered intolerable, and *Samen Op Weg* (*Traveling Together*) is defining a new situation.

John Valk

However, no major ecclesiastical change, especially those involving churches of the Reformed persuasion, is without its consequent hardships. Not everyone is enthused about either of the proposed unions. Many have voiced their apprehensions.

Continued on page 11 ...

Thinkbit

Dear Sir:
You slapped my Johnny around the ears, but we don't approve of that. At home we never hit the kids, except in self-defence.
Mrs. W.
from a note to a teacher

Calvinist Contact

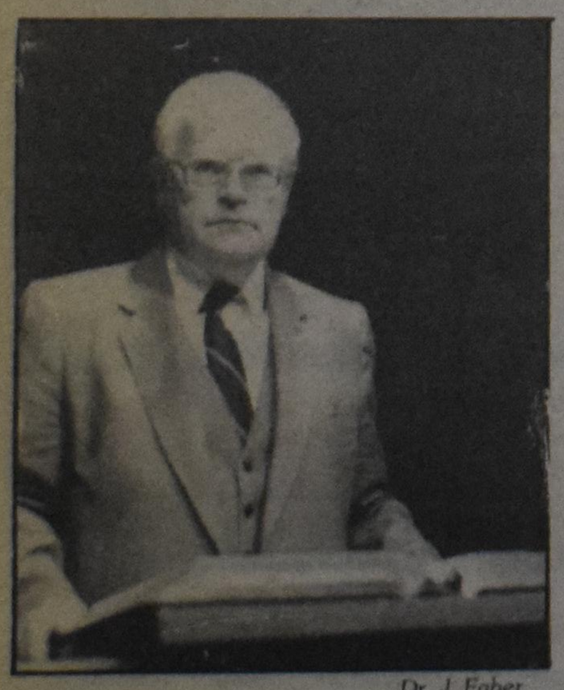
Second Class Mail
Printed in Canada
Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ont.
and Lewiston, N.Y. — see page 2

October 12, 1984
No. 1947
40th year of publication

Canadian Reformed commemorate milestones in church history

Bert Witvoet

BURLINGTON, Ont. — About 400 guests came to take in Dr. J. Faber's commemoration lecture on the Secession of 1834, an event that brought the first split in the Dutch Reformed Church. The lecture took place in the Rehoboth Canadian Reformed Church on highway 5, and is part of a three-lecture series which remembers both the Secession of 1834 and the Liberation of 1944.



Dr. J. Faber

The first lecture focused on the historical background and significance of the Secession or *Afscheiding*. Faber is professor of Dogmatics at the Canadian Reformed Theological School of Hamilton, Ont. His presentation was lucid and thorough, as he reviewed the background of the event that shaped the future of the Reformed (Gereformeerde) churches in The Netherlands as well as in other countries.

He pointed out that the measures aken by the government of Holland in 1816 were a reversal of 1618. In 1618 the renowned Synod of Dort took place. It composed the Canons of Dort which together with the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism became the doctrinal standards for the Reformed churches.

The leaders in government and church in 1816, influenced as they were by the rationalism and liberalism of the day, wanted to remove these "limiting" standards of doctrine. They further instituted a form of government that took away the freedom of the churches, said Dr. Faber. They were motivated by "a false ecumenism."

Continued on page 4 ...

In this issue:

We pay attention to the 150th anniversary of the Secession of 1834. See especially pp. 10,12
Don't miss Jan Disselkoen's account of an initiation ceremony in Sierra Leone p.9
The evaluation of the visit of the two Dutch professors is on p. 12
The Dutch pages carry Van Andel's account of the "Afscheiding" 17,18

Beyers Naude may speak with outside world again

C.C. staff

JOHANNESBERG, South Africa — Beyers Naude, former minister of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa has unexpectedly been released from the ban that was placed upon him seven years ago. He spoke with Elizabeth Grey, hostess of the CBC radio program *As It Happens*.

Mr. Naude, who has been the focus of government suppression because of his outspoken anti-apartheid stance, could not himself explain why he had been given the freedom to communicate with others again. He thought that it might be because the government wants to prove to the rest of the world that it is serious in its reforms of the system. But he was not sure.

Undaunted by seven years of oppression, Mr. Naude's first act of freedom was to visit six men who are holed up in the British consulate in Durban. The men had been detained without trial.

"I wanted to express my solidarity with them," said Naude, "and tell them that I am willing to assist them." Mr. Naude did not see how their situation could be resolved at the present.

To the question of how long he expected to retain his freedom, Naude answered that that is difficult to answer. He had been asked by others whether his intention to support the six men would not lead to the reinstitution of the banning order. "It is possible," he had said. But after careful consideration he had felt he had no choice but to speak out against the unjust and un-Christian system of apartheid. "It is indefensible from the concept of human dignity," he added.

Beyers Naude

He ended the interview by saying that as long as he can do it, he will "try to change that system and assist those who are crying out for justice."

Seerveld leads in Canadian aesthetics

C.C. staff

TORONTO, Ont. — By co-editing a new book on aesthetics in Canada and being an organizer of the 10th International Congress on Aesthetics held in Montreal in August, Calvin Seerveld has become one of the leaders in the advancement of aesthetics in Canada. Dr. Seerveld is Senior Member in Aesthetics at the Institute for Christian Studies.

For the book Seerveld compiled eight English-language essays and wrote the Preface and an Appendix on the status of aesthetic theory in English-speaking Canada. The book also contains a list of Canadian university courses in aesthetics and related subjects, and a list of recent articles and books by teachers of aesthetics in English Canada. These lists show that the Institute, though it is very small, is more active in aesthetics than many Canadian universities.

Calvinist Contact

Editor Bert Witvoet
Publisher Stan De Jong
Editorial Assistant: Marian Van Til
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Typesetting: Kim Yungblut
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Canada mail: Second class mail registration #0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ontario. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3.
U.S. mail: Calvinist Contact (USPS 518-090), published weekly except for July 13, 27, August 10, 17 and December 28, by K. Knight Publishing Limited, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3. Second class postage paid at Lewiston, NY 14092.
Head office: 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3. Phone: (416) 682-8311. Office hours 8:15-4:15 p.m.

Advertising
Display advertising deadline is Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. of the preceding week. Classified advertising deadline is Thurs. 8:30 a.m. for the next week's issue. See classified page for rates.
The publication of comments, opinions, or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by either Calvinist Contact or K. Knight Publishing Limited.
Subscriptions:
Canada: $22.50 for 47 issues; $42.50 for 94 issues
U.S.: $20.00 US for 47 issues; $38.00 US for 94 issues
Airmail: $75.00 for 47 issues

Canadian Calvinist founded 1945
Contact founded 1949
Calvinist Contact since 1951

Editorial Advisory Board: Stan De Jong, James R. Dickey, Anne Hutten, Jacob Kuntz, Nicholas B. Knoppers, Nick Loenen, Ineke Parlevliet, Sonya Vander Veen, William Van Huizen, Ellen B. Zwart.

Editorial

How important is 1834 in 1984?

This year we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Secession (and Return) of Dutch Reformed churches in 1834. It was a secession from a church that had left its Reformed moorings and a return to the doctrinal standards and polity of the earlier Reformed Church.

Commemorations are necessary to any tradition. The Lord instructed Israel to commemorate important events in their history. One of the most striking events in that history was the liberation from the yoke of Egypt.

So God said, "This is a day you are to commemorate ... And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' then tell them ..." (Exodus 12).

Now, we must not think that the Secession of 1834 ranks with the Exodus of Israel, which again is only a shadow of the great liberation that took place in Jerusalem several centuries later.

For the New Testament Church, therefore, the commemoration ceremony par excellence is the Lord's Supper.

No, the Secession of 1834 is, comparatively speaking, a minor liberation event that took place in a small branch of the Holy Catholic Church. As such we do not usually pay much attention to it.

Commemoration enriches

But 150 years is nothing to spit at, and some Reformed people do well to tell their children on October 13 that the Lord helped their great-great-great- grandparents throw off the yoke of a state-imposed form of religion that would have choked the life out of their churches.

I personally have done a fair bit of reading and thinking about the Secession of 1834 lately. Most of the readings were in Dutch: *Van Dominees en Gemeenten* by J. de Haas as well as a recent publication *Om de Grondslagen van het Christendom* by A.M. Lindeboom. (Oh to see the exhibition of "Afscheiding material" in Utrecht and read other recent books about this event!) I have attended the opening lecture on the Secession sponsored by the Canadian Reformed Churches of Burlington, Ontario. All of it was enriching and stimulating.

I do remember hearing years ago in elementary school about a certain Hendrik de Cock from Ulrum, but that stuff did not speak to me then. Ulrum was and is in the province of Groningen, and that in itself removed it somewhat from my immediate interest. If the "Afscheiding" had started in Friesland, I might have pricked up my ears.

Which goes to show, that every person pays attention to those things that he or she can identify with. For that reason only those Reformed people who are members of churches coming out of the Secession will want to commemorate the event.

And then again, some of them may not want to talk too long about 1834. At this time in Holland, for example, the two largest groups that stand at opposite sides of the Secession event are talking about traveling together (Samen Op Weg). Many of them think that the questions of 1834 have shifted to the extent that it makes little sense to revive them.

Liberalism as it was known in the early nineteenth century is pretty well dead now. Very few religious leaders even in the Dutch state Church would expound a deistic message.

What we may learn from them is that one should never simply commemorate an historical event as if it applies in the same way today and is self-evident to all. Commemorating 1834 can even stand in the way of what a church ought to be doing today.

We can learn from 1834

But there is still a great need to understand what happened in 1834. Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it, and that is something the Lord would hold against us.

For that reason we may be disappointed that few Reformed communities have bothered to pay attention to such a significant watershed in the history of the Reformed faith and life.

The struggle was not limited to Holland. There were similar movements afoot in Switzerland, Scotland and Germany. All of them had to come to grips with the spirits of their age — rationalism and liberalism.

Seeing how our forebears coped with these spirits and how they endured persecution should inspire us to be faithful as they were. Reading about their petty squabbles should forewarn us that no group ever has a corner on obedience and faithfulness.

Remembering 1834 may well help us focus more sharply on the battle we have to wage against the spirits of our time. And these spirits are many. But they all have in common that they are manifestations of the flesh over against the work of the Spirit; that they are of man not of God.

Fortunately, as in 1834, today too God provides a complete armour, which enables us, after we have done everything that is in our power, to stand.

Bert Witvoet

Letters

Let God be acknowledged first

The article "A Pilgrimage in Political Theology" by Clark Pinnock (C.C., Sept. 21, 1984) captured my attention in several ways. First of all the name Clark Pinnock is familiar to me, secondly you suggest that "the reader may want to skip the article" because it is difficult and thirdly because of the somewhat patronizing comments with which you precede the article.

I heard Pinnock lecture during the second phase of his sojourn, while I lived in B.C. I liked what he had to say. It influenced my life in that I became more aware of my neighbour's need, the need of the world and my own wealth. That awareness still governs my thinking today.

I admire Pinnock's courage for making his change of mind public. On the other hand he owes that to his followers and those he influenced.

I do believe with Pinnock that "the task of the church can be to encourage christianization of the culture and call the nation to the will of God, and to assure people that God will surely bless the nation whose God is the Lord." I believe we should be in much prayer for our government and ask God to surprise us when we see no way out.

I fail to see how democratic capitalism can improve the world situation unless God is acknowledged first. Democratic capitalism seems to me to depend on the goodness of people. Without a commitment to the will of the Lord the goodness of people runs out quickly and democratic capitalism will be just another system.

Johanna Peetoom,
Willowdale, Ont.

Keep record instead of contact

We didn't renew because we now get the *Presbyterian Record*. Last year we became members of a Presbyterian church. That is also a Calvinistic church.

As such we could still have *Calvinist Contact*, but there is a limitation for everything. If we miss *Calvinist Contact* too much we will subscribe again.

Anco Hamming,
Cornwall, P.E.I.

Mailbox replenished

We certainly want to renew our subscription to *Calvinist Contact!* The reason we are so late in replying is because we just got back from Mexico and have recently moved.

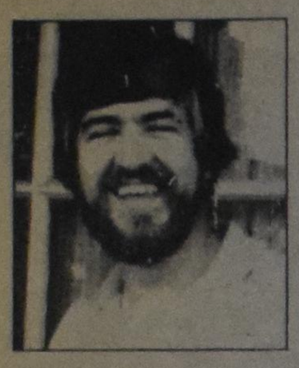
We want you to know that we have enjoyed reading *Calvinist Contact* and have missed it in our mailbox.

John and Dianne Van Rooyen,
Windsor, Ont.

Incorrect reporting does not serve unity

In C.C. of September 21, '84 it was announced that the Canadian Reformed Churches in Burlington would commemorate the Secession of 1834

JUST A MOMENT/HERMAN PRAAMSMA



There is no season such delight can bring,
As summer, autumn, winter, and the spring.
(William Browne, 1591-1643).

Quite a while ago I read the story of Rev. Oemark. He was a man whose greatest attribute consisted in being himself. He was never afraid to give free reign to joy he felt in being alive. "Joy," said Oemark, "is the most important of God's gifts. Coffee is the second most important one; and there it comes now!"

It is a great gift to be able to see coffee as one of God's great gifts, at precisely the moment that it is being served. To enjoy each moment the good things which that specific moment brings. Sometimes I think it's easier for us to look back with nostalgia to remembered pleasures, or to look forward with impatience to a future when somehow things will be better.

Indeed, it is not for nothing that the author of Ecclesiastes tells us: "Say not, 'Why were the former days better than these?', for it is not from wisdom that you ask this" (6:10). He also informs us that there is nothing *new* under the sun. To enjoy each moment, each season, each stage — that is a great gift.

William Browne seemed to have possessed that gift. He could delight in nature to the extent that there was no season like the one he happened to be enjoying at the moment! The good things of summer and winter, springtime and harvest they were all unique and to be savoured in their own right. He didn't go around complaining that it was either too hot, too cold, too damp, or too anything else. Instead he loved the sunlight and the snowflakes, the thunderstorms and the gentle rain. For everything there is a season.

I guess that holds true for life as well, for the different stages that we move through on our journey. Children become teenagers and young adults. Young adults become men and women, move on to middle age and finally to ripe old age. What a gift to be able to enjoy what you are, *when* you are! So many go through thinking and wishing: Oh, if only I were a bit older! If only my youth would return! If only I could go backwards or forwards a little, then I would be happy! What wasted energy. Enjoy what you are now, for each moment is rich in itself. Regret can be a form of escapism, except that it only leads to frustration, envy and dissatisfaction in the end.

But "This is the day which the Lord has made;
Let us rejoice and be glad in it!" (Ps. 118:24).
And "Every day I will bless Thee,
And praise Thy Name for ever and ever!" (Ps. 145:2).

May God give us eyes for His (daily) good gifts.
Enjoy your coffee.

Herman Praamsma is pastor of the Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Toronto.

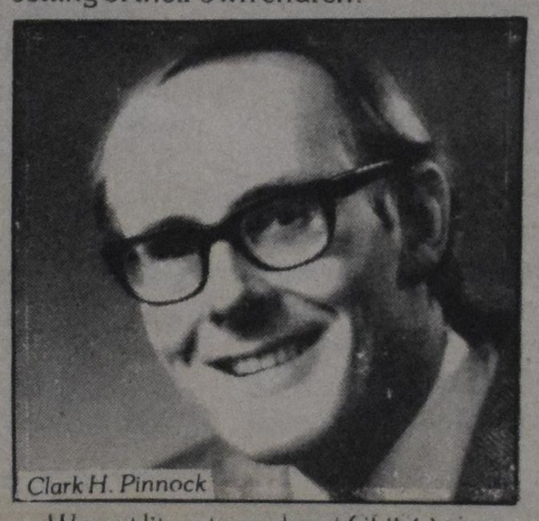
longer letter

Appreciates thoughtful and discreet content

Yesterday I read in the September 21st issue (No. 1944) of C.C. a feature article by Dr. Clark Pinnock. I was so intrigued and impressed with it, that I would like you to send us 6 more copies of the "centrefold."

I plan to send them on to our 3 adult children, some other Mennonite young people I am in contact with and some others I feel should read it.

Professor Pinnock describes so well what many of our younger "thinking" Christians still go through. They search for ideals, values and philosophies compatible to what they experience, see and hear in their society, and to what has been taught them in the confines and setting of their own church.



Clark H. Pinnock

We get literature about CUSO aims (Canadian University Overseas Organization) which are very socialistic, humanistic and starry-eyed.

Then we get our own literature about all kinds of concerns. Some young Mennonite community members and university students sent us their "papers" and statements.

As I am a compulsive reader, I read, wonder and worry. *Calvinist Contact* contents sometimes uplifts, infuriates, shows clearly the small thinking going on. How can it be otherwise? I would bet, that many of our group only read C.C. and the Banner as "Sunday literature"; little more and little deeper.

One reason why our children don't care for C.C. is its exclusive Dutch Christian Reformed simple people's way (it suits me though). They feel, it misses a background of knowing what else goes on in North American society. I keep telling them to go to *McLean* and *Newsweek* for that, and they do. But what views and values are in these materials and how do they judge and evaluate?

So often we still worry about women deacons, minor church and school matters to the exclusion of larger issues. Pinnock writes clearly, analyzing the "movements" parading on the North American continent in order to come to an understanding and value system that will do the job serving God in creation and society, here and now. He seems humble enough to realize all our personal limitations in viewing and sorting it all out, and realizes he is not at the end of his road of thinking yet.

I would like a bit more care displayed in C.C. as it presents prominent and not so prominent people stating their views. Often writers are a bit hard, crude, one-sided, too personal, not informed enough of background and many facets of issues.

Most of us here are the offspring of hardworking, simple thinking, "eigenwijze" Hollanders, who feel honesty and bluntness are the same. Often our young ones squirm at the tone of polemics in so-called "Christian magazines" and literature. They have a point. Not many of us have enough formal education, background, and knowledge of history behind issues and differences, to have the right to be so astringent, rude and judgmental. Maybe your editorial team can do a bit more weeding, editing and clarifying in controversial and painful issues.

You don't get glad converts by preaching *at* them, but discussing *with* them. If C.C. is to survive, it needs, in my opinion, a mix of articles for the simple, hurried and mildly interested and some of the kind Pinnock and Ed vander Kloet and others write. Tuyl should be less vulgar, and Syrt Wolters more modest.

The children's page is fine. I feel the lay-out is a little cluttered. Forget space for Abraham Kuyper and Synod and fill open space with small poems, wise sayings; in most large libraries there are volumes you can sneak quotations from.

It would be wonderful if someone could poke fun at our own idiosyncrasies, but unless it is well done, it is better left out.

I could go on, but both you and I have work to do. Thanks for trying to make C.C. lively, contemporary, varied and coming on time.

Anne Groenenberg,
Chatham, Ont.

EDITORIAL POLICY: We encourage our readers to write brief responses to material published in our paper. Please specify the issue and article you are commenting on.

A long letter, 500 to 750 words, may be published in the upper right hand corner of this page provided it meets editorial standards.

Letters may be abbreviated or only excerpts may be published to meet editorial requirements. Unsigned letters will not be published but names may be withheld upon request.

and the Liberation of 1944. For this announcement I would like to express my appreciation.

However, the announcement was accompanied by some comments. The first was that "the Secession ... was not a secession as such, since those who left the Reformed church were forced out ..."

Fact is that the Act of Secession says, "The undersigned declare that they, in accordance with the duty of all the believers, Article 28, secede from those who are not of the Church." In other words, it was not a secession from the Church, but a secession from those who are *not* of the Church. Is this confessional and therefore biblical language still understood by the sons and daughters of Calvin?

The second comment reads, "The 'Liberation' of 1944 on the other hand occurred when members of the Gereformeerde Kerk broke from it largely over what they felt was synodical oppression ... The Canadian Reformed Church is a direct offshoot of this dissenting group."

Not only is this an insulting way of speaking, it is also in conflict with the facts. They did not break away from the Gereformeerde Kerken (plural, please) but were told to leave the Church. When in accordance with Article 31, Church Order, they did *not* leave the Church, they were *expelled* (many office bearers were suspended, and some also deposed, and to quite a few members also the use of the sacraments was denied." Even then they did not leave the Church, but seceded from those who are not of the Church.

Mr. Editor, I would not have written about this, if this were not symptomatic of the way all through the years on this continent, and also in your paper, such a distorted view has been given. This is, alas, not serving the furtherance of the Church of Christ in the unity of the true faith, for which both the Christian Reformed Church and the Canadian Reformed Church must work and pray.

D. De Jong,
Pastor Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church,
Burlington, Ont.

Editorial response

We apologize for the incorrect wording in both sections of the report. The intention in both instances was good.

In the first one, the writer meant to say that the act of seceding was not schismatic. De Cock's congregation did not voluntarily leave the State Church.

In the second one, there was a recognition of the fact that the synod "forced them to say ..."

Unfortunately, the finer details of who breaks from what is not always correctly worded by the sons and daughters of Calvin. But what is still understood by most is that in 1834 as well as in 1944 the official Church acted not out of the Spirit of Christ. And knowing that is what really counts.

Editor

Special Report

Tragedy struck in Dunnville

William Rang

Shockwaves went through the peaceful community of Dunnville, Ont., when it was learned on Wednesday, September 26th, that John (16 years old), Sandra (15 years old), and Marlene (13 years old), three of the four children of Mr. and Mrs. John Keen had been killed instantly in a motor-vehicle accident.

The tragedy occurred during late afternoon when the three were driving home from Smithville District Christian High-school after having gone to town to do some shopping. The exact reason for the accident in which the students' car hit a tanker-truck will remain unknown although sudden mechanical failure has been offered as a possible reason.

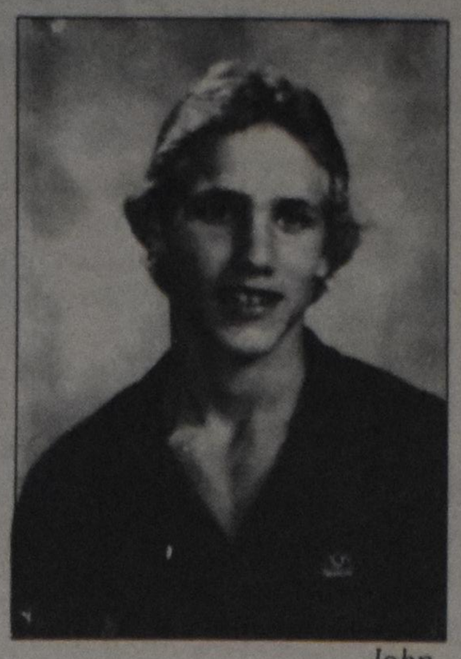
Word of the tragedy spread quickly as people phoned each other. Disbelief became apparent when people phoned back saying, "Tell me that it isn't true."

Yet, it was true. Until deep into the night people who had gone to one another's homes just because they wanted to be together, prayed and cried.

The next day the students of Smithville Christian High came together for an assembly. Most of them wept while others just could not express their sorrow other than in deep silence. The school was cancelled for the remainder of the week.

On Saturday the funeral service was held in the Bethel Christian Reformed Church. The building that usually holds up to six hundred worshippers was filled beyond capacity. In the basement over three hundred people followed the service on closed-circuit television.

The pastor of the church, the Rev. Harry VanderWindt, stressed what all of us knew: John, Sandra, and Marlene were with Jesus because during their brief lives they had not only witnessed to it, they had spoken of their love for the Saviour. They were beautiful youngsters, full of life. They were joyful, spontaneous, kind, and loving. They had gone all-out when fundraising for their Christian schools, and were active on the sports' fields.



John

Sandra

Marlene

Rev. VanderWindt offered words of hope and comfort from the Scriptures with the words of Psalm 121, "The Lord is your keeper," words selected by the grieving parents.

Following the funeral, the students of Smithville District Christian High formed a guard of honour and then followed the mourners who walked behind the hearses to the nearby cemetery.

The Dunnville community will need a long time for healing. There is the comfort of the Lord's love and His presence has been felt by all. Just the same, questions remain and there will be the open gap within a loved family that was cut into half so suddenly.

But rest assured, later we will see John, Sandra, and Marlene again and share in their happiness. That is comfort and it was made possible by the sacrificial death of the Saviour, Who loved these children even more than we did.

William Rang is Principal of the Dunnville Christian School.

No longer a criminal record

Harry Nigh

Three weeks ago, I received a joyful letter from a friend, Don Hanson, who is a former prisoner now working with the Prison Fellowship programme in Ottawa. With his permission, I share what he wrote. "My pardon became final on June 15, 1984, and so have no more record anywhere in Canada; isn't that some great news?" He underlined "have no more record." Don credits the impact of Christian friends who lead him to God where he found the strength for "heart and attitude change."

The letter of pardon from The Solicitor General is one of the few ways that "the system" has found to extend a form of forgiveness. "Your criminal record is now sealed and it may not be disclosed without my prior approval," wrote The Hon. Bob Kaplan.

I believe that the Christian community can have a powerful ministry of foregiveness in our prisons. We don't issue letters of pardon, but by listening, accepting and speaking of God's love in Christ for us; and then standing with inmates as they come back to our community, there can be forgiveness and release. Maybe the knowledge that I am not utterly alone with my guilt, in my separation, is one of the most important keys to my release into wholeness.

Two days ago, I was talking to one of the prisoners who is matched with an M2 volunteer. He has been in prison for so long, that he encountered difficulties when he was allowed out on a pass. "I didn't have any friends any more out on the street." His M2 volunteer stayed with him until 4:30 in the morning as he worked through a very real crisis.

He, and others, have spoken to me of the restorative impact of one volunteer's caring and love. It's a practical living out of the Apostle Paul's words "All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation."

Thanks for standing by this ministry through your work, and prayers and finances.

Harry Nigh is Executive Director of the M2/W2 prison fellowship programme.

We reprint this brief article from his letter to M2/W2 workers.

Milestones in church history

... continued from page 1.

He then took the audience through the events surrounding the congregation of Ulrum and their pastor Rev. Hendrik de Cock.

The main point Faber wanted to make in the latter half of the speech was that the Secession was not a schismatic act and that the seceding churches did not form a sect. They wanted to return to the heritage of the Reformed Church. It was a return to the catholic truth of the Word of God.

"True reformation always is a return to the Holy Catholic Church," said Faber.

It was a remarkable evening from the point of view of those who feel that the heritage of the Church cannot be neglected with impunity. It is unfortunate that not more commemoration events are taking place in other Reformed communities around the time of October 13.

The second lecture at the Burlington Church was focused on the Liberation of 1944, the unfortunate event during the war years that brought a split between brothers and sisters. It remains a question whether it ranks with the event of 1834 as an occasion to celebrate.

"The Right Job, there's nothing like it!"
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News

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl

The foundations of Ottawa are shaking, and from sea to sea the earth is trembling for the great liberal-dragon-slayer has gone forth like a latter day Saint Patrick to cleanse the land from the beneficiaries of the former government's largesse. With all the pathos of an honest three-piece, striped-suit politician Mulroney, shivering with uprightness and honesty, announced that political appointies would be axed. As if anyone ever had expected anything different. "The spoils must be divided," is the ancient law of politicians.

In the meantime the government increased the federal sales tax with one percentage point; a measure which they had opposed while in opposition. This brings the amount of every earned dollar destined for Ottawa to roughly fifty-two cents. Of course, as was to be expected, we will soon witness a debate around the social benefit system. The few red Tories in the cabinet are going to have a tough fight on their hands.

In their desperate attempt to raise money, government officials engage in what is called computerized investigation. That expression defines technological fishing expeditions of Revenue Canada.

Let me give you an example. Somebody taps into the computer data of the Department of Transport and picks out all owners of automobiles worth more than, let's say, forty thousand dollars. Next the tax returns of those people are checked, by computer of course. When the amount paid is not in keeping with the lifestyle of someone who drives so expensive a car, the investigators will descend like ants on a church picnic.

It is also generally expected that we are due for an increase in personal income tax.

John Buchanan, the P.C. premier of Nova Scotia, knows that haying must be done while the sun shines. So he called for a provincial election hoping to ride on Mulroney's coattails. The Liberals have risen to the occasion and responded by promising an election extravaganza worth almost one billion dollars.

Who would be so nasty as to bring up the whole patronage issue again? Well I gave fair warning: *Calvinist Contact* tells it like it is. Isn't it remarkable that a certain Mr. William McAleer, a key figure on the Mulroney campaign team was just appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Ontario Place Corporation in conservative Ontario. What does the great dragon slayer say about them apples? (In one church I preached in a long time ago, the elder of service prayed for "them-there-worshippers.")

We're still oohing and aahing here about the visit of Her Majesty. There has never been in the history of mankind a person who so graciously could cut ribbons, unveil plaques and sit through boring speeches. She did not even smile when the Chaplain-General in Ottawa got stuck in the Lord's prayer. Long live our gracious Queen, as the Rotarians are apt to toast, with water mind you.

I did a quick calculation and discovered that today (october 3, Leyden's ontzet) the dollar would trade for more than two-and-a-half guilders. Buy 'm if you need them within the next year or so.

Internationally speaking, we witnessed a juicy scandal in the U.S. of A., which is known to produce that kind of juice. Not only was a cabinet minister indicated, (whatever that is legally is not very clear) but the timing of it coincides with the beginning of the last phase of the election campaign there. A bit stinky, whichever way you sniff at it.

It was good to see a picture of a smiling Begin, former premier of Israel. The man has lost a lot of weight, but at least he was smiling, something which he hadn't done for a long while. The coalition government in Israel means business. It restricted import of luxury items. Israeli's have to learn to tighten the belt.

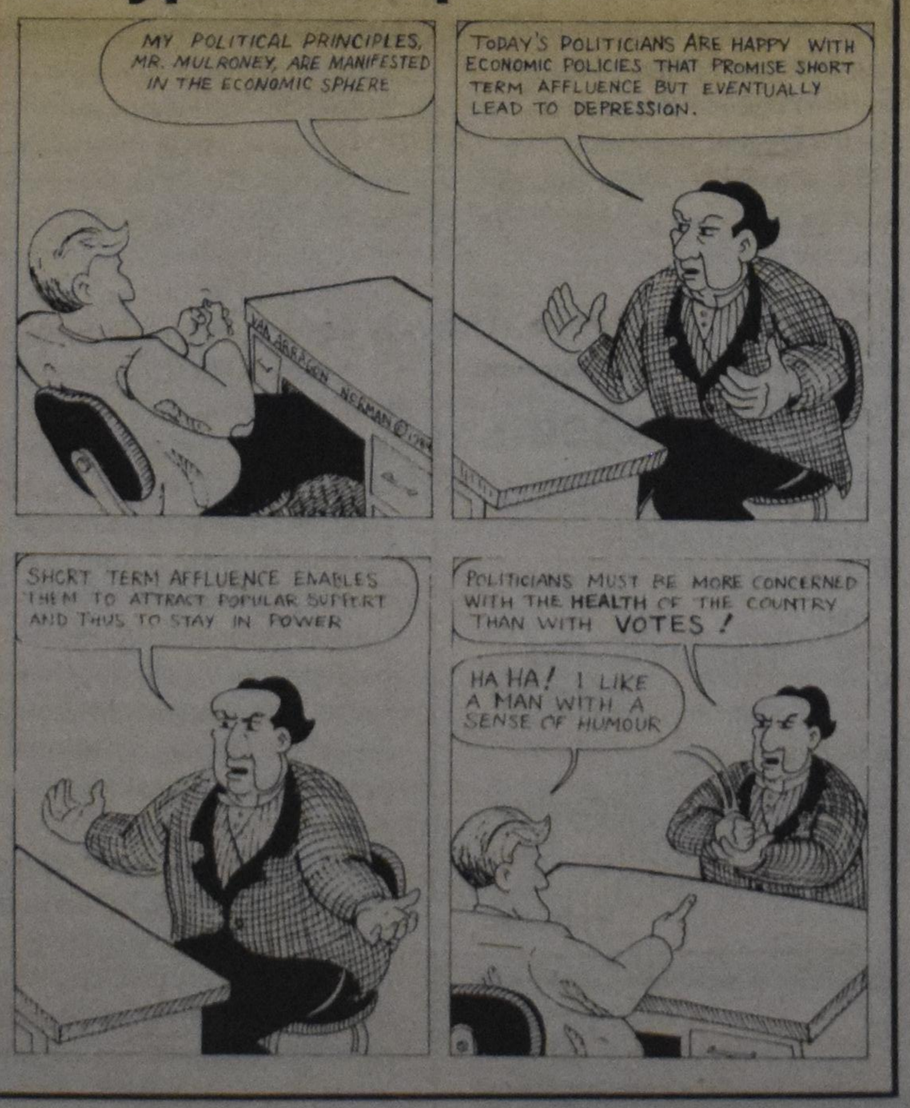
Argentina's deplorable economic state does not allow for payment of interest on loans. That problem is being solved by new loans. A scary business when you consider that Canadian Banks too are much deeper into that venture than is really safe. I am keeping one of my old socks handy.

The Russians established an undeniable record. Three Soviet cosmonauts returned safely to earth after 237 days in space. Usually well informed sources reported that the first thing they asked for was King peppermint.

Hong Kong money is coming into Canada by the ship load, and not in pennies either. Hong Kong will become Chinese in 1997.

It is time again on the ecclesiastical calendar (which determines the liturgical year) for dominee's jokes. You know the requirement, they must be original and fit for publication in *Calvinist Contact*, which is after all a very serious paper. The best joke will be rewarded with an autographed picture of your obedient and humble correspondent. Now there is an indexed, inflation-sheltered possession. Imagine what a picture of this correspondent could be worth twenty-five years from now. Or fifty. It boggles the mind.

Kuyper's Kapers


MY POLITICAL PRINCIPLES, MR. MULRONEY, ARE MANIFESTED IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE
TODAY'S POLITICIANS ARE HAPPY WITH ECONOMIC POLICIES THAT PROMISE SHORT TERM AFFLUENCE BUT EVENTUALLY LEAD TO DEPRESSION.
SHORT TERM AFFLUENCE ENABLES THEM TO ATTRACT POPULAR SUPPORT AND THUS TO STAY IN POWER
POLITICIANS MUST BE MORE CONCERNED WITH THE HEALTH OF THE COUNTRY THAN WITH VOTES!
HA HA! I LIKE A MAN WITH A SENSE OF HUMOUR

Dutch enough?

Is it true that the reason we CRC people don't always welcome visitors warmly is that so many are of Dutch extraction, reserved by nature, not given to overwhelming welcomes? If one looks at Dutch history, he will find that the Dutch are a most hospitable people. No nation's record can match The Netherlands for welcoming the dispossessed and refugees. The Jews of the Spanish Inquisition, the Huguenots of the French Anti-Reformation, and the Jews of the Nazi Holocaust all found refuge in Holland, and frequently in Holland alone. Even today, the tourist travelling in Europe will find that the Dutch are most hospitable.

The Sunday morning problem may not be that we are too Dutch. Maybe in this respect, we should be *more* Dutch.

Bulletin of the Ebenezer CRC, Leduc, AB

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Church

Grimsby pastor retires

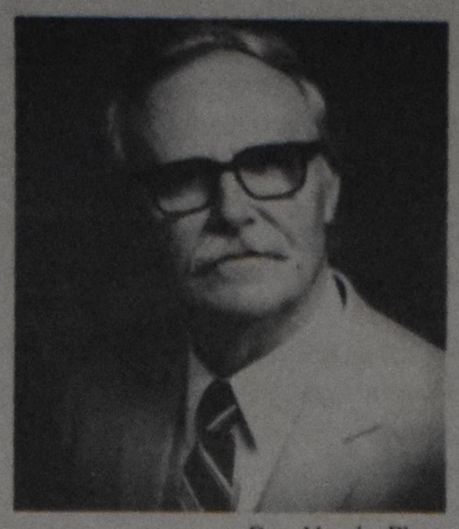
Marian Van Til

Rev. James Van Weelden, a Christian Reformed minister since 1945, begins his retirement this month. For the last eleven years Van Weelden has been co-pastor with Hilbert Vander Plaat of the Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ontario.

According to a report by consistory clerk Peter Bulthuis, Van Weelden's time from now on will be filled with things he has always loved to do — reading, visiting, preaching, and "a little travel," all of which will be preceded by a short sabbatical.

What will he miss most? "Weddings, for the experience of communal joys; and funerals, for then people experience the reality of the faith more strongly, and the resurrection power of God in Christ their living Saviour."

Van Weelden attended the Protestant Reformed Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and began preaching assignments shortly before his nineteenth birthday. He spent ten years with his first (Protestant Reformed) congregation in Sioux Center, Iowa. During that time, due to problems and theological difficulties in the



Rev. Vander Plaat

PRC, Van Weelden and all but one family in his church melded with the local Christian Reformed Church. Van Weelden was soon ordained in the CRC.

Subsequently the Van Weeldens moved to Canada, first to Red Deer, Alberta, then to Chatham, Ontario (1st CRC) and finally to Grimsby. They have chosen to retire in Grimsby to be near four of their six children.

Bulthuis suggests that Van Weelden's final sermon text at Mountainview is a fitting motto for his ministry of almost forty years: "For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2).

CRWRC aids Bengali flood victims

BOGRA, Bangladesh — Uncontrolled flood waters from Bangladesh's three major rivers have damaged homes and washed away newly planted crops across the country. The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) has sent $10,000 in emergency aid to Bogra district where its program is located.

CRWRC staff member Peter Ysselstein reports, "Bogra district usually remains unscathed when flooding occurs, but this year the rivers have swollen to high levels; our area is being affected by a river 20 miles away. Property and crops have been destroyed; people are dying from diarrhea due to lack of clean water and from shortages of food and cooking fuel."

Rick De Graaf, CRWRC Bangladesh director, says CRWRC's $10,000 is being used to purchase food, to truck in clean water, to help with rebuilding, and to help farmers replant. "Because our program focuses on farmers," De Graaf says, "we're doing our best to help them. We've planted rice seedlings on nine acres of ground. When they are ready for transplanting that should be enough for 300 acres of rice. That will help lots of small farmers."

CRWRC's aid combined with aid from the Mennonite Central Committee, Tear Fund, and the Canadian International Development Agency should relieve much of the suffering in the Bogra area.

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Church News

New Clerk

— Fellowship CRC, Edmonton, Alta.: Mr. B. Sinnema, Box 9, Site 6, R.R.8, Edmonton, AB T5L 4H8; 403-459-8140.

New Place of Worship

— Fellowship CRC, Edmonton, Alta., Homestead School, 4555 128 Avenue. Services are held at 10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

— Rev. Nicholas Knoppers (10736 - 43 Street, Edmonton, AB T6A 1V4; 403-469-2993) is the "stated supply" for the Fellowship congregation.

New place of worship

— Tillsonburg CRC; Clerk George Janssen, R.R. 1, Brownsville, ON N0L 1C0; 519-877-2962. Church correspondence: Box 102, Tillsonburg, ON N4G 4H3. Address of church: 120 Concession St. W., Tillsonburg, Ont. Service time 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Address of Secr. of Deacons: Harry Schipper, R.R.#1, Eden, ON N0J 1H0; 519-866-3731. First service: October 7, 1984.

Commemorative Service

— The consistory of the Springdale, Ont., CRC invites all those who experienced Hurricane Hazel to a commemorative service to be held Sun., Oct. 14 at 4:30 p.m. The hurricane hit the Holland Marsh 30 years ago, Oct. 15, 1954. The service will consist of a special sermon and music; refreshments afterwards. Everyone is welcome.

Rime or Reason

Pastor Charles views with alarm
the day of his retirement;
He wonders how he will keep
warm
without his annual increment.

Klaas Sis

The life of Methuselah
would create some great tension
in the complex algebra
of the Canada Pension

Sy Nodd

Pastoral Pondering

Christian modeling

Jack S. Hielema

The principle of Christian modeling is clearly taught in the Scriptures. In Acts 4:13 we read: "When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus." This is what is said about the Christians in Thessalonia: "You became imitators of us and of the Lord .. and so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia." (1 Thess. 1:6,7). Paul also urged a young pastor, "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity show yourself an example of those who believe" (1 Tim. 4:2). And John exhorts, "Imitate that which is good, not that which is evil" (III John 11).

For all of life

Time and again God's Word impresses upon us that this principle of Christian modeling is a total-life teaching. Think of these words that Moses spoke to the people of Israel: "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates" (Deut. 6:7-9; Cf. also Deut. 11:18-20).

Christian modeling, it is clear, is a very radical thing. Let us be very honest — our main weakness is that we are not radical enough in the application of this principle. If we as God's people are to be a model to the world around us we must be in the vanguard as far as justice, happiness, forgiveness, and reconciliation are concerned.

Little impact

Let us take a radical look at the "church." Why do most congregations have little or no impact in the community of which they are a part. There is only one answer — the Person and Work of Christ do not seem to be the major passion of our soul. Take our children and young people. Many of them do not feel themselves to be part of the church. Of all the things that can be said about this, one issue stands out: One wonders how many of the younger generation become cynical when they observe the discrepancy, the great gulf that exists between faith and action.

I agree with A.J. Heschel, author of the *Insecurity of Freedom*, who pointed out that the problem of our youth is not first of all *youth*. The central problem is that we who profess to belong to the Christ do not consistently know how to think, how to repent, how to pray, how to cry, how to deal with the spirit of the times, how to put our lives upon the altar of sacrifices for Christ's sake.

A second hand religion won't do. The people in our community, and our children, want to know what is real and genuine in our relationship with the Lord. They don't want casual commitments. They are not satisfied with slogans and phrases. They want us to be more specific, more open and honest. They don't want us to talk about Jesus and His love on Sunday while on Monday they see a faith that is smothered by compromises and superficial insights. It isn't enough to keep the Sabbath day. All the days of the week must be "days of the Lord." In a word, when people look at us as Christ-confessors they expect to see, not an image which has been fabricated, but the real thing. This alone puts colour into the cheeks and hope into one's heart.

Indeed the times are crying out for a fresh outburst of radical Christianity. What a joy it is to share the gifts of life in Christ with others. Consider the millions of souls that are searching for life's meaning. We are challenged to use our creative abilities in every direction. In the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings and complications of life we may demonstrate that Christ is alive in a dying world. Being in the life-stream of the Vine (John 15) the perspectives of His Kingdom are being opened more and more. It is the whole of life that must be sanctified.

Jack Hielema is pastor of the Maranatha CRC, Calgary, Alta.

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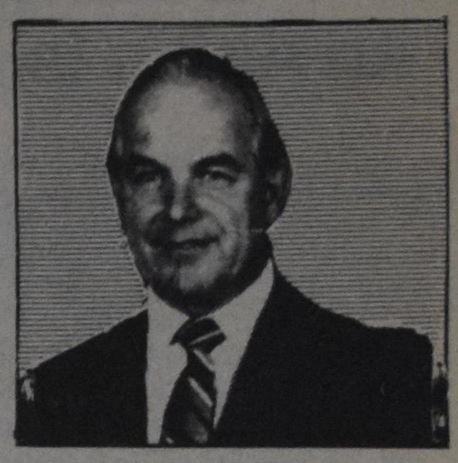
Life in Russia and in Ontario



Rev. Jacob Kuntz

Jacob Kuntz

On Russia

One of the most interesting columns in the Mennonite Brethren Herald *is the one with the "Personal Opinion" of John H. Redekop. He teaches political science at the Wilfred Laurier University of Waterloo and what he writes is always worth reading.*

The Sept. 7 issue of the Herald *contains a report on his visit to the USSR in which he describes the strengths and the weaknesses of the Soviet society. It is good that from this first-hand report we can learn something about life in Russia and about the position of the church in the midst of it all. We print the article in its entirety.*

Impressions in the Soviet Union

This column is being written in the USSR. After several weeks of touring, visiting, and observing, certain impressions have been formed. On the positive side, the following are noteworthy:

From the perspective of the hungry masses in the "Third World," the Soviet authorities have built an enviable system; the basic necessities are available for all.

Even in those regions where until the 1920s millions of people had no written language, illiteracy has been virtually eliminated.

Basic health care, at low cost, is available throughout the land; medical facilities and standards are being improved.

The degree of religious freedom, while varying among the republics, is clearly much more extensive than it was a generation ago. In some areas, unfortunately, the situation has recently deteriorated.

Educational opportunities are constantly improving.

Numerous other achievements from sports to space and from heavy industry to northern development are also significant. However, the large number of negative aspects of this far-reaching closed society must also be acknowledged. Ten specific items come to mind.

For no logical reason many peaceful and law-abiding evangelical Christians, as well as many Jewish and Muslim people, are still being persecuted and hassled by state authorities. Constitutional provisions guaranteeing religious freedom are blatantly ignored.

In general economic terms, the Soviet Union is woefully backward. I would estimate that 80 percent of the people live below our so-called "poverty line" and the situation seems not to be improving. Party slogans often evoke ridicule.

The housing situation is particularly serious. Most families live in very cramped quarters and even at that the waiting period is often three to five years.

"If you live in the Soviet Union, be prepared to spend one-quarter of your waking hours standing in lines," was the astute comment of one observer.

The Soviet Union is a shining example of the fact that total central planning of the economy doesn't work. The huge bureaucracy is inefficient and deadening.

In most endeavours, individual initiative has been stymied. There seems to be considerabie pride in country, but relatively little pride in work. Time and time again workmanship is shoddy. In many shops, clerks are discourteous. Often they have to be cajoled or pressured into assisting customers. I get the distinct impression that many salespeople hope you won't buy anything, thus sparing them the bother of paperwork and the inconvenience of restocking the shelves.

Much of the essential economic infrastructure, including bridges, roads, sidewalks, and public facilities generally, is in a sorry state of disrepair or neglect and nobody seems to care.

At the "front line" level, service to tourists is still woefully inadequate. If you travel to the Soviet Union expect many interesting and informative experiences; do not expect to find bountiful conveniences and great consideration.

The official hand of political dictatorship is still heavy. The borders remain "closed", the media controlled, the elections symbolic, and "loyal opposition" non-existent.

For better or worse, many Soviet citizens, perhaps most, seem woefully ignorant of the outside world. The perception of Western achievements and short-comings is greatly distorted.

Finally, a few words about the faithful church. Despite all of the difficulties, it is thriving. The preaching I heard was dynamic, biblical and effective. The fervent, eager participation is obviously authentic. The fellow-believers are warm and gracious. They are also patient. The economic and political system may be strictly second-rate, but the resilient, perservering church has much to teach us.

Funding of Separate Schools

The Canadian Baptist *is not happy at all with the decision of Ontario's Premier to fund the Roman Catholic Highschools fully. A short editorial article in the* Canadian Baptist *of September '84 also seems to imply that the magazine will not welcome it either when our Christian schools would receive government dollars.*

It is frustrating that Christians in this country cannot come to the collective conclusion that Christian schools are a must in our religiously diversified society and that governments may not ignore these schools when they divide the tax dollars. Here follows the article:

Leave it alone

With regret we note that the Ontario Government has agreed to fund Separate Schools through the last year of high school. The move is regressive. It further divides Canadians into segments. It leads to the state involved in church policy.

When the public purse pays for Separate Schools should non-denominational trustees be elected? Should non-denominational teachers be hired? Will other denominational schools be fully funded?

The government by this action has further eroded the public school system in Ontario.

Think Christmas now

By November 1, Christmas parcels for seamen are already placed on the ships so that by Christmas day when at sea, the seafarers are able to enjoy *your Christmas parcels*.

By December 25 there is ordinarily not a ship in port anymore. *So plan ahead and send your parcels soon.*

We know that you will encourage us again with some 2000 parcels but there are only two people here in Montreal who must process this entire venture — by finding out the exact number of men and women on board, by sorting out which languages they speak, and then preparing Bibles in those languages, by writing individual Christmas messages to some 70 different ships, by delivering the parcels while often fighting sleet and snow as well as a "rush" schedule.

You can help us greatly by observing a few suggestions:

1. Kindly wrap each parcel attractively and firmly.
2. Do *not* attach anything on the outside.
3. When you mail parcels in lots (together with other parcels in big boxes), please make sure you mark clearly on the outside of the big boxes *how many* parcels are enclosed.
4. Do not put magazines in the boxes. Ship magazines separately.
5. Do not put letters or cheques *in* the boxes.
6. Carefully follow shipping instructions:

A. When using the *Postal* Services the Address should be: The Rev. H. Uittenbosch, c/o G. Townsend Co., 214 Place d'Youville, Montreal P.Q. H2Y 2B2

B. When using the *Voyageur Bus* Services the address should be: Same as above, but ADD telephone number: 844-1476 or 684-0345.

C. When using *Trucks* which are passing through and with whom no arrangement can be made over the telephone, *drop parcels off* at: The Rev. H. Uittenbosch, c/o Petro Canada Station, Exit 55 on Highway 40, West-bound (Sources Blvd.).

Your parcels should reach me by *December 1* at the latest.

Preparing a Christmas gift-parcel

What should a Christmas-Gift-Parcel contain?

So as to be sure that every parcel is of about the *same value*, and so as to facilitate shipping, it is suggested that you obtain from a local shoe-store an empty children's shoe-box.

A. Each box should contain at least *one* item of some value, for example: a pair of socks, or a scarf, or pair of gloves, or a tuque, tie, set of handkerchiefs, set of cuff-links, bath towel, or after-shave lotion.

B. It is further suggested that each box contain *as well:*

1. A set of airmail envelopes (with or without a writing pad), and
2. A package of candy, or chocolates, or nuts.

C. Should you wish to enclose one or two other small items such as: a clothbrush, shoe-shine kit, miniature clothing-repair kit, etc. *besides* the suggestions found in A and B above, feel free to do so.

D. Finally, we suggest that you enclose a card, preferably with a few lines of your own on it. You might wish to put your name and address on that card, as well as a few words of what Christmas means to you. You might possibly get a reply if the recipient is able to communicate in English.

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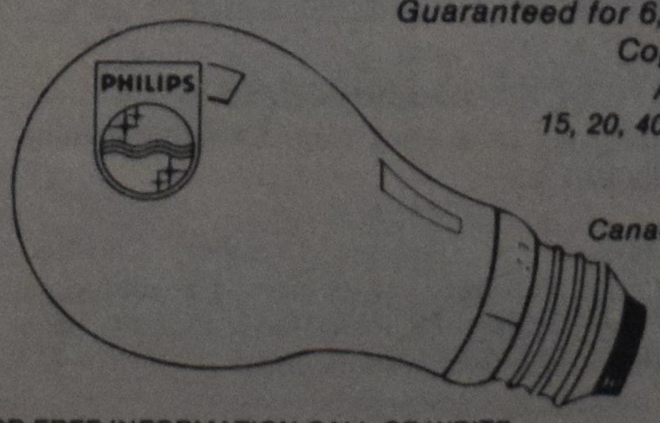

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School

Chalkmarks

An onion is ordered

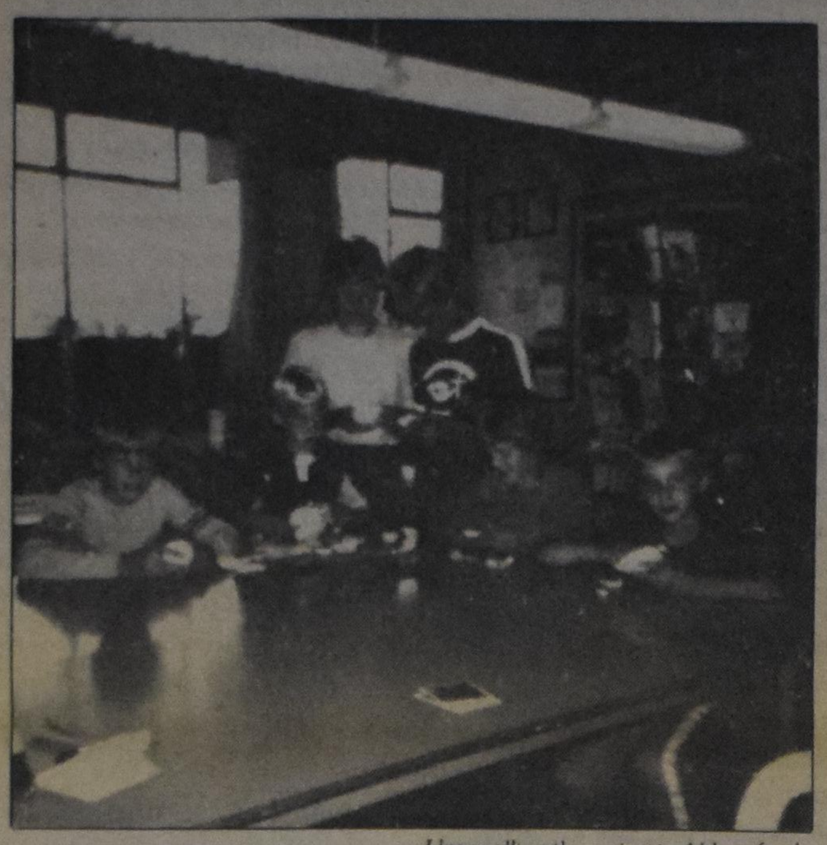
Children in Abbotsford Christian School examine natural materials to discover patterns in connection with their mathematics program.

Many materials are gathered from their world. They are real and are used for exploring and problem solving. As they examine an onion and see the pattern of rings they appreciate the beautiful way God has created the world.

In mathematics they can be taught to utilize not only the patterns they discover in their world but also those existing in numbers and geometric figures. They gain an understanding and appreciation of the beauty, logic and order of God's world.

Patterns exist in most life situations, in nature and history, in music etc. There is a close link between the ability to recognize patterns and to think logically. As the children learn to detect patterns, the carry over value is great ... beyond mathematics and beyond the classrooms.

Karen Polman,
Abbotsford Chr. School, British Columbia



Unravelling the onion in Abbotsford

Financial help for work study

WORK STUDY. A federal program called Cooperative Education is being launched in September 1984. The program helps school boards cover the additional administrative costs of creating new or existing work study projects. Employment and Immigration Canada will contribute 85%, 75%, 55%, and 35% of the costs respectively in the first four years.

For more information call the Co-op Application Control Centre (819) 994-4699 or write to Employment and Immigration Canada, Cooperative Education Program, 140 Promenade du Portage, Phase IV, Room H-502, Ottawa-Hull, K1A 0J9. Closing date for the submission of applications is December 30, 1984.

innocence

jesting mirthfully
the clown tripped
unwittingly over minute piano
wires,
sending wary children into
sudden rolling gales of laughter
so that they, too, were falling
over unseen threads,
stitching their sides.
adults scornfully
looking on
condemned the clown with
their eyes, and he frowned
at the sad plight of senescence,
then smiled,
and continued to
delight little ones
with his innocence.

Liz Hietkamp

Liz Hietkamp is a grade 11 student from Palmerston, Ontario.

Dordt's enrollment varies little

SIOUX CENTER, Iowa — Inspite of smaller high school class sizes, Dordt College's enrollment is nearly the same as last year's, reports admissions director Howard Hall.

"Because of the shrinking pool of prospective students, we predicted a lower total enrollment," stated Hall. The projection, made two years ago, predicted an enrollment of 1052, not 1103, the total enrollment for the beginning of Dordt's 1984-85 school year.

Last year's enrollment was 1113 — this year's enrollment stayed close to that number partly because of good student retention in the upper classes.

"Our predicted enrollment was much smaller, simply because there are fewer Christian Reformed high school students than there used to be. But since a small percentage of all Christian Reformed students choose to go to Christian colleges, our recruiting field is far from being exhausted."

Izaak de Rijcke, B.Sc., LL.B., O.L.S.
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INSIDE ICS ICS ICS

An interesting letter came to the Institute the other day from Finland. It is surprising to get mail from Finland — it is so close to Russia and seems so dominated by Russia that we wonder whether they have much religious freedom.

So it was a surprise to get a letter from "... a small publishing company which has as its special area the publishing of Christian teaching literature." A surprise and a great pleasure.

The letter asked our permission to translate and publish in the Finnish language Bob Goudzwaard's book "Capitalism and Progress." The Institute owns the copyright to the book because a few years ago we employed Josina Zylstra to translate it for publication, a translation which really became a whole new edition. It was then co-published by Eerdmans and Wedge.

The letter also says that they have invited Dr. Goudzwaard to visit Finland in September and lecture as the guest of the Finnish Philosophy of Science Research Society.

We are delighted to learn that Dr. Goudzwaard's distinctive Christian thinking in economics and public affairs has caught the eye of some Finnish Christians. They plan to distribute the book as a gift to all members of the Finnish Parliament and other influential members of Finnish society. We wish them well. We also invite Canadian and American Christians to read this book.

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A unique contribution to the teaching of Church History in the junior high school was developed this summer by a group of District 11 teachers. *Today/Yesterday/Tomorrow — A Study of Church History* is being sent to each district school. We would love to get your reactions so that this new unit might be improved in the future. A set of slides developed to accompany the unit is available on loan from the Curriculum Office.

Prairie Patchwork,
Sept. 1984
CSI, District 11

Feature

A Canadian teacher encounters life in Sierra Leone (6)

We witnessed female initiation ceremonies

Janet G. Disselkoen

Jan, a teacher from North Edmonton Christian School, packed up her books and left for Sierra Leone to take part in a special mission project of the Christian Reformed Church. She is writing down her impressions for the readers of C.C. in a series of articles. The first four articles appeared in the January issues of this year.

Dry season is the time of socializing and celebrating among the Kuranko people. With the rice harvest in, more time is spent in the village, and community life thrives. The high point of dry season activity is *biriye* — the female initiation ceremony.

For weeks before the actual celebrations, groups of girls, from 12 to 16 years old, tour the countryside bringing gifts to relatives and inviting them to initiation. During these days the girls oil their bodies until they glow and wear only short, brightly coloured wrappers. Metal amulets such as coins and whistles dangle from chains around their necks. Their hair is plaited in a special style, gathered into two knots at the sides of the head, and adorned with a wide beaded band across the forehead.

Different dates are set for the initiations in different village so that it is possible to attend more than one celebration. The highly secret operation itself always takes place on Saturday morning (first day of the Islamic week), but guests begin to arrive on Thursday bringing with them gifts of food and money to help cover the costs.

One Thursday afternoon Mary Kortenhoven and I drove out to the village of Solia where we had been invited to the initiation of a niece of friends.

During the day the girls had moved from household to household singing, dancing and receiving gifts.

Shortly after we arrived, the relatives gathered in front of the household we were visiting and began the ritual sacrifice. As we heard chanting from the inner circle of men, we were told that prayers were being offered to the ancestors asking for protection and healing for the initiates. The sacrifice of rice flour paste was then shared among family and friends.

After eating rice in the kitchen compound with the women and children, Mary and I joined some dancers parading through the village streets. Soon a crowd gathered around a large open circle. As it grew dark, drummers played and young boys danced in the circle, scurrying in and out of a rope twirled by two men. Suddenly the piercing shriek of a whistle broke into the confusion signalling the start of the high point of the evening's dancing — the rope dancing.

People had come from many surrounding villages just to see this dance because it isn't performed very often anymore. From the shadows into the circle pranced eight men. They wore brightly coloured T-shirts and raffia skirts. Raffia anklets dusted their feet, and bands of seed rattles were tied around their calves. Most striking of all was their headgear: tightly fitted caps to which were attached tall raffia crests running from the center of the forehead to the nape of the neck.

The dancers formed a circle within a circle. As each one faced a drummer, playing on a hollow log, he began an improvised dance, adapting his movements to the changing rhythms of the drumming. Sometimes the dancer jumped acrobatically in and out of the rope. Sometimes he moved back and forth in front of the drummer, climaxing his dance with a wild leap that ended inches from the drummer's face. After several hours Mary and I left, but the dancing continued until dawn.

Several weeks later I was invited to another initiation with Angie Hoolsema, the primary health coordinator on the Kuranko team. We set off late Friday afternoon for a village which could be reached only by a two hour hike into the bush. Long before we reached the village, by this time walking in the moonlight, we could hear the beat of drums echoing through the hills.

The family that had invited Angie had twin daughters, both of whom were being initiated. They welcomed us, showed us our sleeping quarters and introduced us to the girls. That day the girls had undergone a ritual washing and were dressed in long, white, 'country cloth' gowns of heavy cotton strips sewn together.

Again the crowd was moving through the village with dancing at each household. At each stop the girls were seated on stools to watch the dancing. Some of the women were waving large pieces of wrapper cloth above and behind themselves as they danced in front of the drummer inside the circle.

Angie and I were just going to get our wrappers so we could join them when we heard the staccato of hollow bamboo stick drums in the distance. The crowd scattered, and we were hustled to our sleeping quarters. The mens' devil was out, and all women and children had to stay hidden until he left.

The sounds of the drumming, gazoos playing and the singing of the mens' witch-finding cult continued for half an hour. This was to insure that none of the girls would be bewitched at a time when they are particularly vulnerable to witchcraft.

Shortly after we were allowed to come outside again, the women ushered us into a traditional circular house where only the women and initiates were allowed. There they chanted songs about the end of girlhood, acted out the circumcision ritual in a rather explicit dance, and shared a meal together. Angie and I went to bed about one, but the dancing, both inside the women's house and outside, continued until a violent thunderstorm dampened the celebrations in the early morning hours.

This picture may be the first of its kind. It was taken five hours after these girls had the biriye operation.

We were called out of bed shortly after dawn. The air was fresh, and water still dripped from the trees. Groups of women and initiates were moving through the village. We were about to follow one group when our hostess whispered for us to follow her.

A small group of women was heading down a path into the bush. Several women were thrashing the bush with branches to keep bush devils away, and a fetish was placed on the path after we passed. In a small clearing Angie and I were given the singular honour of being allowed to witness the clitordectomies of the twin girls.

Our feelings were mixed as we felt the solidarity of the women working together and strongly supporting the girls while performing what we considered a deforming operation in unsterile surroundings, an act which ultimately is the result of a totally male dominated society.

As soon as the operations were over the girls were walked back through the village, cleared of men by women's devils, to another large clearing in the bush where the other initiates were already laying on mats. There the girls would spend the day sleeping, eating, and being attended to by their fellow society members. We visited the clearing once before we left the village to give gifts to the girls and the society, share a meal, and take some pictures.

During the three weeks following the operation the girls will not be seen by anyone except the women. They will go to the clearing every day to receive instruction on marital duties, on their responsibilities toward their sisters in women's society, and on the secret lore of the women's society. They will dance, play and sing together and develop a special closeness with their fellow initiates which will last a lifetime.

When the three weeks are over there will again be a time of feasting, dancing and celebrating. The girls, with hair intricately plaited with bright red beads, will be presented to their future husbands if they are betrothed. Again they will travel around the countryside visiting relatives until the time of their marriage or before joining their families again.

The high point of their lives will have passed, and they will begin the difficult years of serving their husbands, bearing and caring for children and working on their farms.

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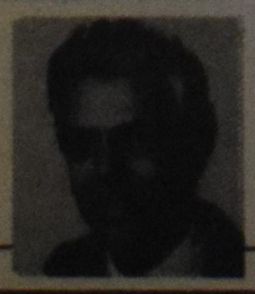

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Feature

It started in Ulrum — October 10 to 13, 1834

J.H. Martens

During the last three years of the French occupation of Holland, from 1810 - 1813, the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church experienced rough times. The payment of their salaries which had become the responsibility of the State since 1795 when the French revolutionary armies had installed a friendly government in the former Dutch Republic, virtually ceased. Napoleon Bonaparte, by now Emperor also of Holland, needed the preachers' money for his armies.

On the return of the Royal House of Orange in 1815, King William by a decree known as "Het Algemeen Reglement," tried to improve the sorry state of affairs in the Dutch Reformed Church.

"Het Algemeen Reglement," — best translated perhaps as "General Directive" — was a document of authoritarian character. Democratic ideas found no place in it. The Church was told what to do and how to behave.

Despite the fall of Napoleon and France, the ideas of the French Revolution and Enlightenment were still in the air. The monarchs of Europe had regained their thrones and ruled as absolute monarchs, their absolutism tempered and influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment and belief in progress. The cry "Ni Dieu ni maitre" was not forgotten by large segments of the people and even the Dutch Reformed Church was served for a large part by preachers who did not take the Bible or the Confessional writings very serious, though there were not a few others as events would prove.

The "General Directive" ordered "the doctrines to be maintained." In practice, however, every Shepherd was able to preach as he saw fit. Initially there was little criticism heard about the "General Directive." The ministers and their flocks wanted peace and order above all things. The tumultuous times of the recent past were not forgotten and especially the ministers remembered how more than one of them had suffered want with his family under the French regime.

The Reformed Church in Ulrum where the drama of the "Afscheiding" took place

Peace at all cost was the password between 1815 and 1834. And yet, there was a certain unrest in the Dutch Reformed Church.

An undercurrent against the obligatory "Gezangen" (Spiritual songs) was manifesting itself ever stronger.

They were called "Patriotten Liederen," a derogatory name, referring to the Pro-French elements among the population.

Revival in Ulrum

In Ulrum, a town in the Northwest of the Dutch province of Groningen, a certain Ds. Hendrik de Cock served the local Dutch Reformed Congregation since 1829. During his student days he had shown himself to be a serious Bible student. In Ulrum he familiarized himself with the works of Calvin, especially the latter's: "Christianae Religionis Institutio". Nothing reveals better or more clearly the superficiality and shallowness of the standard theological education of those days than the fact that de Cock got to know the works of Calvin only after he had been a minister for several years.

The young preacher's religious conviction became stronger and his sermons breathed a biblical spirit.

There was great joy in the hearts of many that a man of God again was bringing the word of the Lord. A good many people had stopped going to Church for too often they were offered stones for bread, but in Ulrum the church became far too small. People flocked from all directions to hear the inspired preacher in the modest church building. The consistory advised to build an addition, but the "Kerk Voogden" or Financial Directors of the Property Committee — that is the hard-nosed moneyed property owners among the members, most of them of unorthodox bent — failed to see the need.

In those days there was still a Minister of Religious Affairs in function in the Netherlands. This personage influenced the King against Ds. de Cock by ascribing motives of ambition and vanity to the popular preacher. The dice had been cast and in influential circles de Cock became very impopular and even hated.

In 1833 he was summoned before classis accused of baptizing children from neighbouring congregations. Parents in those congregations were asked to acknowledge that the doctrines "taught in this church" are the complete doctrine of salvation. Many could not in good conscience say yes to that question. They therefore requested baptism in the Ulrum church.

De Cock refused to promise to desist from baptizing infants from surrounding congregations. Nothing in the "General Directive" forbade this practice. Of late he had indeed also written against unscriptural views appearing in certain publications. He saw no need to recant his criticism. Punished with indefinite suspension de Cock appealed to a higher Church court which sentenced him to two years suspension without salary. The latter decision was made on April 1, 1834.

A few weeks later de Cock was again summoned before the Tribunal for his condemnation of the "Gezangen," which he had called "nothing but one-hundred and ninety-two seductive love songs, only fit to lead the Reformed people from the saving truth and to introduce a false doctrine of lies."

Such strong language angered the highest authorities in the Church. It must have been a shock to the King, who as an autocrat had always insisted on strict compliance with "het Algemeen Reglement" of 1816, which stated that in every service at least one "Gezang" must be sung.

On May 29, 1834 de Cock was dismissed as preacher of the Dutch Reformed Church. When de Cock appealed the verdict, he was told that within six months he must make amends for his behaviour and express repentance and sorrow for his misdeeds, something which de Cock refused to do.

n

Events took a stormy course from then on. The consistory of the Reformed Church in Ulrum pressed de Cock to secede and they were joined in this by the greater part of his congregation. But de Cock hesitated. It was no small thing to break the bonds with the ancient national church.

On the 8th of October H.P. Scholte, a minister of similar convictions, paid an unexpected visit to the Ulrum parsonage, where there was great sadness for the Lord had that day taken away a dear little daughter.

On Friday, October 10, Scholte preached in the Ulrum Church, but was refused permission to preach in the Church building again on the Sunday following October 12. That's why Scholte spoke that afternoon in the open air behind the parsonage. On Monday, October 15, he departed again. The two friends had not decided to take the great step of seceding from the national Church during their encounter. Their correspondence makes this clear. When Scholte departed that Monday morning, he was sure that de Cock would again address the King and the Synod for redress.

However, de Cock independently decided on Monday, October 13 that such appeals would be useless. As soon as Scholte had left, de Cock convened the consistory and told them of his decision to separate from the Reformed Church.

His decision was received with great joy and gladness.

The so-called "Act of Secession or Return" was formulated and signed by the consistory on that same evening of October 13, 1834.

On October 14, a congregational meeting was held in a private dwelling, where some one-hundred and thirty people formed the first "Afgescheiden" congregation.

Ferocious persecuting awaited them in the following five years. The oppression of these people reminds us of the time of Louis XIV, who in the 17th century sorely persecuted his Huguenot subjects. It is really unbelievable that such a thing could happen in Holland. We cannot detail here the suffering of the "Afgescheidenen" or "Secessionists." But their steadfastness is not forgotten and must be gratefully remembered.

Their spiritual descendants in the New World, where many "Afgescheidenen" settled in the eighteen forties and afterward, will perhaps pause for a few moments come the days around October 10 to reflect on one of the most significant events in the history of the Reformed faith. They will remember how God led his people through the wilderness of state religion and rationalism and allowed them to worship under the liberating preaching of the Word of God.

John Martens is a freelance writer who lives in Listowel, Ont.

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Scholte and Van Raalte

Richard Vanderkloet

The secession (afscheiding) from the Dutch state church (Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk) in 1834/35 was led by youthful clergymen with determination, zeal and courage. As so often happens when young leaders articulate and defend a position that is strongly at variance with the status quo, these leaders developed abrasive, stubborn personalities that often polarized debate and exaggerated differences. They intended only that their actions and beliefs would sharpen the difference between the true faith and apostasy; their attutides and actions sometimes magnified real differences and caused unnecessary suspicions of fellow believers' motives and integrity.

Hendrik Pieter Scholte was one of those young men. He was the leader of a small group of students at the University of Leiden in the early 1930s who were dissatisfied with the liberal tendencies of the Dutch state church. With the exception of Hendrik de Cock, all the ministers who led the secession belonged to Scholte's club in Leiden. And it was Scholte's advice to de Cock that influenced the first secession from the state church.

However, Scholte was soon alienated from several of his fellow secessionists (de Cock and Van Velzen), and when he eventually led his congregation to America in 1848 he went to Pella, Iowa, despite urgings from Van Raalte to join his group in Holland, Michigan. Scholte's independent streak stamped the Iowa church for as long as he lived. After his death it united with the Christian Reformed Church.

Scholte's aloofness was also manifest within his own congregation. Perhaps this was partly cultivated by his wife Mareah, daughter of a professor and not very inclined to adapt to the harsh realities of pioneer life. Consequently, Scholte and his family travelled to America by steamship, while his congregation came in more cramped sailing vessels.

Within a year of arriving on the prairies Scholte had built a large, two-storey frame house, beautifully furnished, and a nine-acre flower garden which was tended by a hired gardener. Meanwhile, many of Scholte's parishioners continued for several years to live in sod huts.

Albertus Van Raalte was younger than Scholte and was never deposed from a state church pulpit. Instead, being known for his sympathy with the views of Scholte and others, he was never even admitted to the ministry in that church. Consequently, his career began in a seceding church in 1836.

Van Raalte and his brother-in-law, Anthony Brummelkamp were the first seceding church ministers to endorse the idea of mass emigration as a solution to the abject poverty experienced by so many of their church members. And Van Raalte was the first pastor to accompany these people in order to provide leadership in the setting up of a Dutch Christian colony in America.

The Log Church in Holland, Michigan, was built by Dutch immigrants who had participated in the Secession of 1834.

Holland, Michigan was the site chosen for the settlement in 1847, and through the early years Van Raalte was instrumental in keeping the struggling colony alive.

However, a major rift developed in the Michigan churches in the early 1850s because of Van Raalte's decision to lead them into a union with the Dutch Reformed Church (now the Reformed Church of America). Not surprisingly, the churches split in 1857, resulting in the establishment of the modern Christian Reformed Church. Several churches, including Van Raalte's own congregation, stayed in the Dutch Reformed Church until after his death, but then switched to the CRC.

Scholte and Van Raalte were capable leaders who received strong loyalties from the people they led and even stronger reactions from those with whom they disagreed. We can be thankful for the way their work has endured but also for the way their schismatic tendencies have been lessened in the years since they completed their work.

Richard Vanderkloet is a teacher of History at the Toronto District Christian High School

Precarious struggle toward unity

... continued from page 1.

The Nederlands Gereformeerden (NGK) have difficulty with the Christelijke Gereformeerden's interpretation of certain Scriptural texts (especially Genesis 3) and with its membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Clarification on at least these two points must be forthcoming before scattered local ecumenical trends between these two church groups can become nation-wide.

The Hervormden and Gereformeerden (GKN) confront each other with views on Church Order, the role of Church in Society, and the current issues of homosexuality, abortion and euthanasia. More orthodox groups within the Hervormde Kerk (especially the Gereformeerde Bond) are fervently opposed to the more liberal (Kuitert, Wiersinga, et al) elements within the Gereformeerde Kerken (GKN). The situation in effect has completely reversed itself in the last one hundred years.

Danger of splintering

All of this is not to be taken lightly, particularly as it concerns the Gereformeerde Kerken (GKN). The threatening danger with the proposed merger is, of course, that many, rather than one, churches may emerge. One has only to take stock of all the dissatisfaction within this church to sense that 1986 may suddenly be the straw that will break the tenuous Gereformeerde camel's back into several splinter groups. Certain regional or more traditional churches may decide no longer to identify themselves with a Synod that over the years has only alienated them anyway.

There are, however, two factors which may serve to work against the former trend toward perpetual church-splitting, and struggle toward encouraging present movements in the direction of church union. The first is the above mentioned tendency toward ecumenism. Toleration, a spirit generally absent from Reformed circles, may yet gain a stronger foothold.

The second is of a more practical nature. Setting aside differences sometimes becomes less difficult when the ship itself is in danger of sinking. High maintenance costs coupled with decreasing membership and church budgets, problems plaguing especially the Hervormde and Gereformeerde (GKN) churches, may force many to think more seriously in the direction of church union. How much this may already be the case may be difficult to document. Suffice it to say that it undoubtedly would work as a stimulus.

The present ecclesiastical situation in The Netherlands is precarious. There are favourable trends, some of which offer promising resolutions to past and present problems. The nature of these problems, however, are quite complex. They defy simple solution. The next decade most certainly will prove to be of major interest to everyone concerned, especially to Reformed circles outside of The Netherlands.

John Valk is a Ph. D. candidate at the University of Toronto currently doing research in The Netherlands.

Last prison letter from Hendrik de Cock to his wife

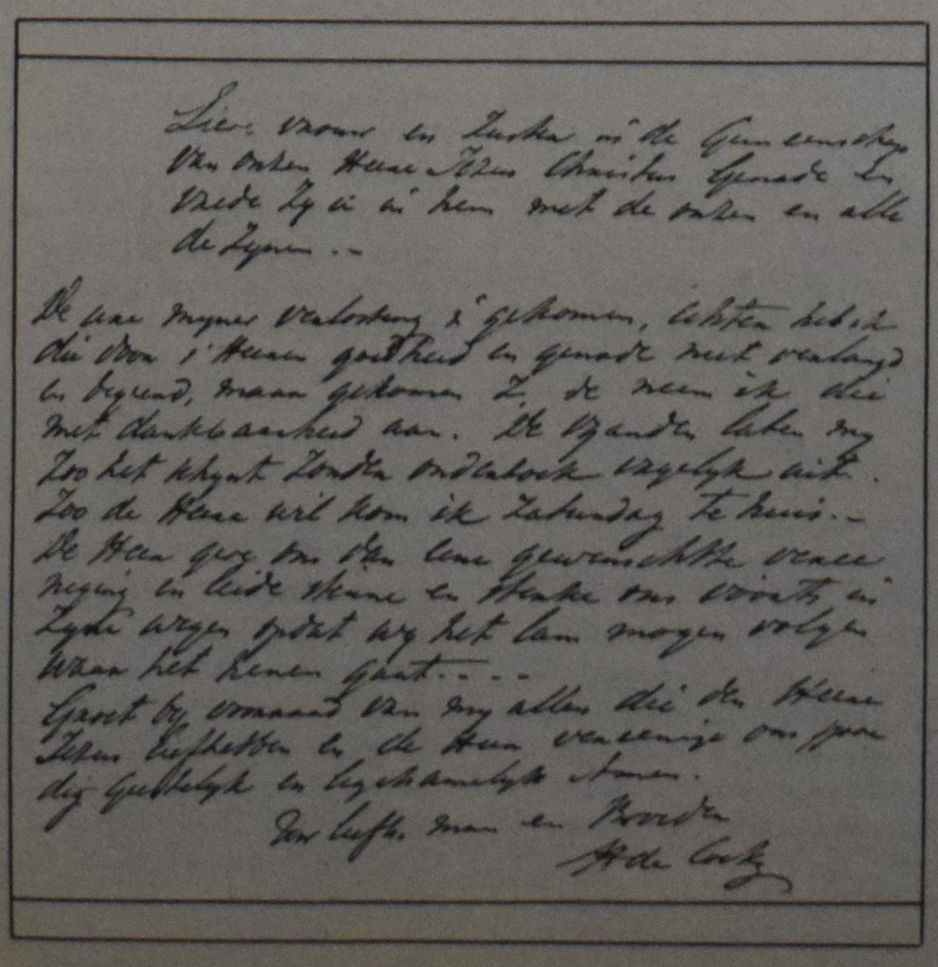
Dear wife and sister in the communion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Grace and peace be with you in Him, with those who are ours and all those who are His ...

The hour of my release has come. However, I have not placed it ahead of my longing and desire for the goodness and grace of the Lord. But now that it has come, I accept it gratefully. The enemies are letting me go apparently without further questioning. The Lord willing, I shall be home on Saturday. The Lord give us then this desired reunion, and continue to lead, support and strengthen us in His ways, so that we may follow the Lamb wherever it may lead ...

Greet in advance, on behalf of me, all those who love the Lord Jesus. The Lord unite us soon, spiritually and bodily. Amen.

Your loving husband and brother,

H. de Cock



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Community Report

A North-American response to Schippers-Bakker

Bert Witvoet

Last week C.C. reported on the visit of two Dutch professors to the North American continent, particularly on the Hamilton visit. They had come to report on developments in the sister Church, the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. *This week we attempt an evaluation of what we think we heard. Since Professors Bakker and Schippers took turns reading a jointly prepared speech, we will refer to them in this article as Schippers-Bakker.*

What were these two strangers from Holland doing here, talking about a church we no longer recognize? They asked us not to look for a familial likeness, and with good reason. Those who left the GKN through immigration 30 years ago should not expect their mother church to stand still during subsequent years just so that the old pew is kept warm in case of a visit.

Dr. Al Wolters from Redeemer College was right when at the end of the Hamilton evening he observed that the GKN and the Christian Reformed Church are on two different tracks. That could be a complaint, but it could also be a simple statement of obvious fact.

It was an impossible task the two professors had taken upon themselves. How can anyone explain what has transpired in the churches in The Netherlands in a forty-five minute speech? But their attempt was credible.

One must also admire the courage and honesty with which they threw themselves into their task. The audience was not all that warmly inclined. Several had come to hear their worst suspicions confirmed. After the meeting one exclaimed, "It's as bad as I thought it was." And another commented in his note to the speaker, "May God have mercy on us all."

Analysis of the present situation

The Schippers-Bakker speech began with an analysis of how the Dutch church has come into the waters of turmoil it now is in. It appears that two decades after World War II, just when the church thought it had survived this war rather well, just when the ranks had swollen and Holland was back on its feet, the youth of the land and of the church began to ask questions.

How could God allow six million Jews to be put to death? How could a church split during the war years? Where is the love that the church should show to the homosexual neighbour?

According to Schippers-Bakker, it became a matter of fighting for the generation of the future. All institutions were treated with distrust, including the Church. Tradition and authority were rejected. What does a church do in such a situation? Evade the issues? Tackle them?

The Church decided to tackle the issues — to find new ways of making the Word of God speak to this distrustful generation. This, we must admit, was a courageous decision.

Schippers-Bakker freely admit that it was also a dangerous decision; they don't know where it is going to end. But they believe that they must proceed, trusting the Lord to bring them through.

What can we, who live somewhat more sheltered as a church, say about these things. Should we warn our brothers and sisters?

Hold fast

We think we should. The fact that we are not in the maelstrom ourselves both qualifies and disqualifies us. It disqualifies us to the extent that we cannot fully understand the predicament our brothers and sisters are in. But it qualifies us in that we may have an outside perspective they don't have.

We may well ask, have the Dutch churches not given up too much? If their youth come up with the same questions as the outsiders, if they too reject authority and tradition, could the church not have weathered that storm better by quietly holding on to much of the authority and tradition that has served them well in the past, and looking only for gradual, well-thought out, responsible changes?

"Faith cannot exist without authority and tradition," says Schippers-Bakker. We could add, respect for the Church will not exist either without authority and tradition. A Church that capitulates to the rebellious mood of its youth, however well intentioned, is indeed walking a very dangerous path.

So far it does not appear that this course has brought the youth back into the Church in any significant numbers either.

The authority of the Bible

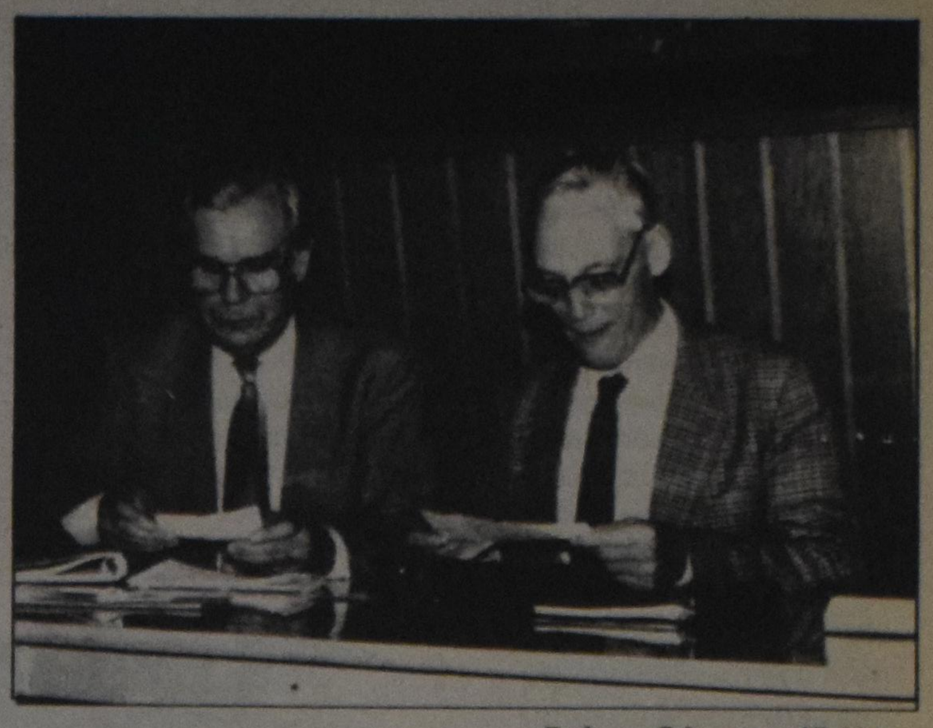
The second point the Schippers-Bakker team addressed is the place and authority of the Bible. "We still confess that the Bible is the Word of the living God," says their report. They do not deny the authority of the Bible, but they ask themselves what kind of authority it is that the Bible carries.

"It does not mean that the Bible is true only when we make it true. That would be the end of authority," says Schippers-Bakker. But the result of scholarship has been that new things are learned about the Bible.

They mention the fall of Jericho. According to historians Jericho was down long before Israel came on the scene. The story is not an historical record. It is more a picture of how Jehovah God defeats the enemy before Israel does. Israel must learn to trust in God, not weapons.

This example makes one wonder about the place of science in the theology of the Church. Does science with its often inflated claims on the Truth now lead theology? It's true, Israel had to learn a lesson, but through a parable? Again it seems as if the Church is too willing to give up her own certainties in favour of new theories.

Coupled with this development in thinking about the Word of God is the concept of relational truth. The Dutch report "God with us," brings out this concept. The authority of the Bible is in the spoken Word. People have to hear it in their own circumstances before it becomes binding.



Professors Schippers and Bakker

It's a small step from that to "the Bible is true only when we make it true," something which Schippers-Bakker want to avoid, because that would be the end of authority.

Pastoral care

The third point in the speech was the matter of pastoral care and church discipline, particularly as it applies to the homosexual neighbour.

There are so many different opinions about what the Bible says about homosexuality, that the Dutch Church is not willing to issue a verdict. Some say the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah are not the sins of homosexuality but of rape and male prostitution. "The Church has no authority to bind the conscience of its members," says Schippers-Bakker.

A number of questions come to the fore here. Does the Church not have the authority to bind the conscience of its members in things of importance? The question of homosexuality is not exactly at the level of meat offered to idols.

Secondly, does the fact that the Dutch churches have not rendered a verdict in the matter of homosexuality mean that they have not adopted a certain position? When an enemy is at the gate of a castle, and the Lord of the castle does not yet know whether he is going to defend that castle, has he not in fact taken the position of not defending himself?

How long are the churches in Holland going to withhold judgment? There is a constant refrain in the Schippers-Bakker speech of not being sure, of struggling with deep questions, of being tolerant and patient, of trusting in the Lord to carry them through. How much of that is abdication of responsibility? How much of that, in fact, is not intellectualism?

Should we sever ties?

Listening to Schippers-Bakker was for many of those present not an easy experience. One feels a lot of sympathy for the struggling sister church. Our situation here in North America so far is a bit easier. We are not as much involved in the turmoil of the surrounding culture. The churches here have more a life of their own. Using a metaphor, it seems as if our ship is still hugging the shore and we are watching our sister ship founder in a storm out at sea.

We must be careful not to be too judgmental.

We must remind ourselves that our Reformed churches in the past have been subjected to several splits. Some of them were caused by a schismatic spirit on both sides of the dispute. We may keep in mind here a comment made by one of the Dutch professors, "I have never yet seen a split in the Church that separated the sheep from the goats."

The question we must ask is, may brothers and sisters ever separate as long as they hold on to the confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He came into the world to save us from our sins, and that His redemption is the only source of our comfort in life?

If the Church in the past erred on the side of being too judgmental, perhaps what we have to say now is that the Dutch Church errs on the side of being too tolerant. Have we ever disavowed our own Church when it erred on the side of judgment? Should we now disavow a sister church that errs on the side of tolerance?

We will not judge our brothers and sisters in The Netherlands. But we do urge them to be firmer in their discipline, not to give in too easily to the spirits of the time, not to worry too much about losing their youth. The Lord saves His Church when His people are faithful. May all of us on both sides of the ocean, be faithful.

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Births

KRUISSELBRINK: With praise and thanksgiving to God, we John and Margriet (nee Dekker) are proud and thrilled to announce the birth of our first born, a daughter, REBEKAH ANNE. She was born Wednesday, September 12, 1984 at 2:35 a.m., 8 lbs. 4 oz., 21¼" long. Proud grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Kruisselbrink of Guelph and Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Dekker of Smithville.
Home address: 17 Crimea St., Guelph, ON N1H 2Y5

VAN MINNEN: "For thou didst form my inward parts, thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise thee, for thou art fearful and wonderful. Wonderful are thy works!" (Ps. 139:13, 14a).
We, Pat and Diana, with joy and thankfulness, announce the birth of our second child, a son. BRENT JAMES, 8 lbs. 10 oz. was born on September 13, 1984. He is welcomed by his sister Charmaine. Brent is the 3rd grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. J. Vandenberg of Norval, Ont. and 8th grandchild of Mr. G. Van Minnen of Scarborough, Ont.
Home address: 38 Nine Pines Rd., Kitchener, ON N2E 1L4

WITTEN: Don and Gail thank the Lord for the gift of their first child, MARK ALLAN, born September 8 and weighing 8 lbs. 7 ½ oz. Grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. E. Witten and Mr. and Mrs. D. Banks of Edmonton.
Home address: Box 1445 High Level, AB T0H 1Z0

ZEE: We, Frank and Marlys give thanks to God for entrusting to our care a son, TIMOTHY FRANKLIN, born August 5, 1984. He is a welcomed brother for Nathan, Geordin and Janna. Another grandchild for George and Grace Zee of Red Deer, Alta., and Bill and Pauline (Postman) Pol, of La Glace, Alta. He is the 60th great-grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Frank Zee of Red Deer, Alta.
Box 68, La Glace, AB T0H 2J0

Congratulations!

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J.C. VANDER MUNNIK

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Marriages

HOLMAN-GRIFFIOEN: With thanksgiving to God, who has brought them together, Mr. and Mrs. Klaas Derk Holman are happy to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter LOIS HENRIETTA to HENRY WILLIAM, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Griffioen of Sunderland, Ont. The ceremony will take place, D.V., on October 13, 1984 at 3 p.m. in the Mt. Brydges Chr. Ref. Church. Rev. Max Lise officiating.
Future address: R.R.2, Sunderland, ON L0C 1H0

VAN KEULEN-DENGO: Mr. and Mrs. Richard Van Keulen of Blenheim, Ont., are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter, DIANE to ALLAN, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Dengo of Brantford, Ont. The ceremony will take place, D.V., on Saturday, October 27, 1984 at 4 p.m. in the Clarkson Chr. Ref. Church of Mississauga, Ont. Rev. W.C. Veenstra officiating.
Future address: 90 Paisley Blvd., Mississauga, Ont.

Invitations

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Anniversaries

Lemmer Ingersoll
1959 October 8 1984
"Rejoice in the Lord, I will say it again. Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).
With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord, we hope to celebrate with our parents,

FRANK and ELIZABETH (Betty) DE JONG
(nee Heida)

Congratulations Mom and Dad.
May God continue to bless you with many more years of happiness together.
Femmy — Ingersoll
Hessel
John
Jake
Brenda
Home address: 233 Oxford St., Ingersoll, ON N5C 2V8

Congratulations and best wishes

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Stoffer and Grietje Veenstra (nee Tel) who will celebrate their 50th Wedding Annivesary, D.V, on November 8, 1984.

1959 October 1 1984
With joy and thanks to our God for His faithfulness, we could celebrate together the 25th Wedding Anniversary of,

KATHY and JAKE BOER
(nee Vis)

It is our prayer that the Lord will continue to bless you for many more years to come.
Mom: Mrs. Theresa Vis
Brothers and sisters:
Allan & Joan Vis
Teeny & John Tempelman
Amy & Barry Garton
Audrey & Okko Jonker
Jim & Linda Vis
Alice & Gary Ogilvie
Andy & Alice Vis
Anne & Wayne Caruso
Audrey & Joe Kompon
Steve & Bonnie Vis
Rick & Joyce Vis
Janet & Michael Bewski
Home address: 2617 Moodie St., Thunder Bay, ON P7E 4Z9

October 26, 1984
With thanks to the Lord for His faithfulness, we hope to celebrate with our parents, grand and great-grandparents,

KOOB and JANTJE DROST
(nee Bergman)

their 55th Wedding Anniversary.
With love from their children:
Stien de Weerd — Clinton, Ont.
Jenny & Clarence Haalstra — Port Hope, Ont.
Henry & Piea Drost — R.R.3, Clinton, Ont.
Roely & Bert Donkersgoed — R.R.3, Moorefield, Ont.
Stef & Ron Schelhaas — London, Ont.
Jane & Ted Bruinsma — Brampton, Ont.
Diane & Cecil Bruinsma — R.R.4, Goderich, Ont.
Henny & Mari van Laren — Rexdale, Ont.
Coby & Bill Slotegraaf — R.R.7, Lucknow, Ont.
37 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren.

1959 October 16 1984
With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord we hope to celebrate, with our children, our 25th Wedding Anniversary,

JERRY and ALICE GERRITSEN
(nee Langbroek)

We pray the Lord will continue to bless us and keep our family in His care.
Our children: Alan, April, Nancy, Melissa.
Open House will be held on October 20 from 4-6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of the Mountainview Chr. Ref. Church, Grimsby. Best wishes only, please.
Home address: R.R.3, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B0

Best Wishes

Duurswoude (Fr.) Smithers, BC
1934 November 8 1984
"This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24).
The Lord willing, on November 8, 1984, we wish to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our parents,

STOFFER and GRIETJE VEENSTRA
(nee Tel)

May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you in His care.
Congratulations from your children:
Fettje & Andy Viersen — Neerlandia, Alta.
John & Sara Veenstra — Smithers, BC
Hennie & Dick Groot — Smithers, BC
Linda & Evert Vroon — Kitchener, Ont.
Willy & Ted Vanderhoek — Langley, BC
Ted & Joanne Veenstra — Smithers, BC
Jenny & Roger Huitema — Peers, Alta.
George & Tena Veenstra — Smithers, BC
43 grandchildren, 6 great-grandchildren.
Home address: Box 252, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

Truro, NS Brampton, Ont.
1959 October 15 1984
Your steadfast love O lord is as great as the heavens your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds.

HANS and JANE LUSE

hope to celebrate their 25th Anniversary with an Open House on Saturday, October 20 from 2-4 o'clock in Immanuel Chr. Ref. Church, 63 Church St., E., Brampton, Ont.
Home address: 8 Church St., E., Brampton, ON L6V 1E9

Goes Mount Vernon
1934 October 25 1984
Text: "... but by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13b).
With joy and thankfulness to our Lord we are happy to announce the 50th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

MARK and KATIE ROUW
(nee de Jonge)

It is our prayer that the Lord will continue to bless and guide you both in years to come.
With love from all of us:
Marinus & Jill Rouw — Mt. Vernon, Wash.
John & Elly Vandergraaf — Richmond, BC
John & Nita Rouw — Oak Harbor, Wash.
Otto & Marjo Rouw — Nigeria, Africa
Steve & Katie Junquist — Stanwood, Wash.
and 14 grandchildren.
Home address: 1651 Britt Rd., Mount Vernon, Wash. 98273

Anniversaries

Muirkirk, Ont. Muirkirk, Ont.
1959 October 16 1984
With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord, we are happy to announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents,

DICK and JEAN VERBEEK
(nee Wielhouwer)

All our love:
Ron & Grace
Brenda & Ken
Jacqueline
"How can I repay the Lord for all His goodness to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people" (Psalm 116:12-14).
Open House: October 20, 8 p.m. at the Highgate Legion, Branch 335.
Best wishes only!
Home address: R.R.#1, Muirkirk, ON N0L 1X0

Trenton, Ont. Trenton, Ont.
1954 1984
On October 12, 1984, the Lord willing, we hope to celebrate with our parents;

ANTHONY and HILDA WIELEMAKER
(nee Overdijk)

their 30th Wedding Anniversary. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless and keep them in His care, for each other and for us in the years ahead.
Their thankful children:
Marilyn & Gord Vreugdenhil; Curtis, David
Laura & Jack Roeleveld
Rena & Paul Hoornweg; Nicholas Kenneth
Beverly & Martin Boekee; Daniel, Rachel
Anthony
Home address: R.R.#1, Trenton, ON K8V 5P4

1959 October 24 1984
With great joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we are happy to announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

RUDOLF and SADIE WIKKERINK
(nee Witteveen)

We thank the Lord for the many blessings you have received over the past 25 years and pray that He will continue to keep you both in His care.
With love and congratulations from your children and grandchild:
Christine & Peter Peereboom; Sharlene — Victoria
John
Fred
Eileen
Open House will be held on Wednesday, October 24, from 2-5 p.m. at the Duncan Chr. Ref. Church.
Home address: 4250 Trans Can. Hwy., R.R.#1, Cobble Hill, BC V0R 1L0

1954 October 22 1984
With gratitude to the Lord for His faithfulness, we hope to celebrate the 30th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

GUS and IRENE WOLTING
(nee VanderSluis)

We thank and praise the Lord for His loving care, goodness and grace to them and pray that He will bless them for many years to come.
With much love from your children and grandchildren:
Ann & Dennis Rolph — London, Ont.
Ray & Jenny Wolting; Gregory — Chatham, Ont.
Gerry & Linda Wolting; Kristy, Kevin — Chatham, Ont.
Henry — at home
Home address: R.R.#3, Chatham, ON N7M 5J3

Classified

Obituaries

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live and whoever lives and believes in Me, shall never die" (John 11:25,26).
On October 3, 1984, it pleased the Lord in His goodness and mercy to take home,

JOHN GERHARD AALBERS

at the age of 70 years.
Beloved husband of: Sina Aalbers-ter Haar.
Dear father and grandfather of:
Ed & Lisa Semplonius; John, Christine, Sandra, Gary, Melissa
Henk & Linda Timmerman; Karen, Ian, Jeremy
Gary & Rita Aalbers; Joel, Brian, Matthew
Funeral took place October 5, 1984, at Rehoboth Chr. Ref. Church, Bowmanville, Ont. with Rev. A. De Jager officiating.
Home address: 20 Martin Rd., South, R.R.#6, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K7

Peacefully in her sleep on Friday, September 28, 1984, the Lord called home our dearly loved mother,

WILMA ELGERSMA
(nee Sybrandy)

Widow of Tom Elgersma since November, 1981.
Dear mother of:
Peter & Jane Elgersma — Petawawa
Hessa & Andy Dykstra — St. Catharines
Wilma & Michael Johnson — Port Perry
Tina & Alex Krikke — Emo
Norma Elgersma — Niagara-on-the-Lake
Grandma was loved and will be sadly missed by grandchildren:
Bev & Jeff de Ruiter
Tom & Peter Elgersma
Valerie & Rob Dykstra
Mark, Kevin and Jesse Johnson
Doug, Mike, Sandra, Diana, Ralph, and Joel Krikke
and great-grandson Andrew Scott de Ruiter
Also survived by six sisters in The Netherlands.
The funeral service was held on Monday, October 1, 1984 at Covenant Chr. Ref. Church, St. Catharines.
Rev. J. Vos officiated. Interment at Niagara Lake Shore Cemetery.
John 5:24.

Suddenly, on Friday, September 28, 1984, the Lord in His infinite wisdom, took unto Himself, our dear friend,

Mrs. WIEKE (Wilma) ELGERSMA
(nee Sybrandy)

of St. Catharines, Ont.
Lord's Day 1: "What is your only comfort in life and death?" "That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.
Sadly missed by:
Jacob & Renny de Vries & children — St. Catharines, Ont.
Hendrik & Hillie Antonides — St. Catharines, Ont.
Henk & Hillie Westerhoff — St. Catharines, Ont.

The Lord our God took home with Him in glory our dearly loved husband and father,

HARRY ZOMER

of 72 Spruceside Cr., Fonthill, in his 56th year.
Survived by:
Jean (Nymeyer) Zomer, his wife whose life was spared and is improving.
Jackie, his daughter and her husband Henry Stuive of St. Catharines.
Bryan, his son and his fiancee Janette Postma
The funeral took place September 22, 1984 at the Trinity Chr. Ref. Church, St. Catharines.

Obituaries

On September 18, 1984, our heavenly Father called to Himself at the age of 72,

HUIBRECHTA DE RUYTER
(nee VanderMeer)

"The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God" (Ps. 92:12-13).
She lived with a song on her lips and died with a song in her heart.
Predeceased by her husband Casper de Ruyter on July 15, 1978.
Beloved mother, mother-in-law and grandmother of:
Henrietta & Richard Roe; Anthony — Burlington, Ont.
Adriana de Ruyter & good friend Margaret Diletti — Hagersville, Ont.
Catharina de Ruyter & Cal Francis; Melinda, Emile — Barbados
Elizabeth & Gerrit Veeneman; Shellie, Geoffrey, Christopher, Michael — Listowel, Ont.
Beloved sister and sister-in-law of:
Mrs. P.M. VanderMeer-Akkerman — Apeldoorn, The Neth.
Miss J.J. VanderMeer — Gorinchem, The Neth.
Mr. and Mrs. IJ VanderMeer — Apeldoorn, The Neth.
Mr. & Mrs. A.J. Van der Rest — Heemstede, The Neth.
Miss C. VanderMeer — Dordrecht, The Neth.
Funeral took place September 20, 1984 at Immanuel Chr. Ref. Church, Hamilton, Ont.
Mailing address: Mrs. Roe, 2095 Meadowbrook Rd., Unit #1, Burlington, Ont.

Suddenly on September 27, 1984, God in His divine wisdom took into His loving arms forever,

NELLY FEDDEMA
(nee Sikma)

at the age of 54.
She was loved by all of us and we will miss her tremendously.
Beloved wife of Peter Feddema, and caring mother and grandmother of:
Edna & Case DeRoo; Shane, Aaron — Kelowna, BC
Nelly & Harry Rekker; Leona, Daniel — Millbrook, Ont.
Sonya & Rinke VanderVeen; Rachel, Jason, Tamara — St. Catharines, Ont.
Sharon & Bill Vanderherberg; Laura, Michael — St. Catharines, Ont.
Yvonne & Marinus Koole; Paul — St. Catharines, Ont.
Tom Feddema; Jorin — Bowmanville, Ont.
Home address: 10 Martin Rd., R.R.#6, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K7

On September 27, 1984, our heavenly Father called to Himself at the age of 54,

NEL FEDDEMA
(nee Sikma)

"Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands" (2 Corinthians 5:1).
May this be the comfort of Peter Feddema and his children.
Mrs. Y. Sikma (mother) — Shalom Manor, Grimsby, Ont.
Pete & Jane Sikma — Newcastle, Ont.
Pier & Rose Sikma — Orono, Ont.
Klaas & Sonya Reitsma — Ingersoll, Ont.
Tom & Elizabeth Sikma — Norwich,
Sjerp & Edna VanderMeer — Hickson, Ont.
John & Margaret Sikma — Newcastle, Ont.
William & Betty Flikkema — Georgetown, Ont.

Safe in the arms of Jesus.

Obituaries

"Safe in the arms of Jesus."
Suddenly as the result of an automobile accident on Wednesday afternoon, September 26, 1984 coming home from Smithville Christian High School, the Lord took unto Himself three of his dear children:

JOHN RICHARD KEEN
SANDRA JANE KEEN
MARLENE YVONNE KEEN

son and daughters of John and Agnes Keen and brother and sisters to Clarence Keen.
We pray that the Lord comforts them.
Their friends:
Joe & Ann vander Stelt & fam.
Dick & Ann Hoekstra & fam.
Mike & Jane Draaistra & fam.
Gary & Helen Mans & fam.
"Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God, I will strengthen you, I will help you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand" (Isaiah 41:10).
Dunnville, Ont.

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31).
"But we do not grieve like those who have no hope" (I Thess. 4:13).
On Wednesday, September 26th, 1984, the Lord called home as the result of a tragic automobile accident our dear cousins:
JOHN RICHARD KEEN at the age of 16.
SANDRA JANE KEEN at the age of 15.
MARLENE YVONNE KEEN at the age of 13.
It is our prayer that the Lord continue to comfort and strengthen their parents John and Agnes and brother Clarence.
Dear cousins of:
Martinus & Heather Otten
Katherine & Rien Westendorp
Clarence & Diana Otten
Albert Otten & Lisa Voorberg (engaged)
Mike & Rhonda Vanderwal; John, Jane Vanderwal
Ed & Michelle Rauwerda
Gary & Jo-Anne Rauwerda
Ron, Andy Rauwerda
Geroldine Keen
Jo-Ann & Harry DeKleer
Barry Keen
Harvey, Janet & Alan Hiddema
John, Linda Vink
Tommy, Kevin & Tim Warnaar
Clarence, Mary & Jane Snip
Address: R.R.#5, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W4

JOHN, SANDRA & MARLENE KEEN

On Wednesday, September 26, 1984, the sudden death of John, Sandra and Marlene Keen brought shock and mourning to our school. John, Sandra and Marlene were vibrant Christian teenagers, known by both walk and talk. We extend to Mr. and Mrs. John Keen and their son Clarence our deep sympathy and prayers.
"And Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he die'" (John 11:25).
Students, staff and board of the Smithville District Chr. High-school.

On September 5, 1984, the Lord called unto Himself our dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

Mrs. EVERDINA MAST
(nee Oldegbers)

in her 93rd year.
She is survived by 6 sons, 4 daughters, 60 grandchildren, and 50 great-grandchildren. The funeral service was held September 8, 1984, in the Neerlandia CRC; Neerlandia, Alberta. Rev. C. Tuininga and Rev. N. Vriend officiated.

Obituaries

The Ladies Society "Being a Blessing," wish to extend their condolences to the family KEEN on the tragic death of their children, JOHN, SANDRA and MARLENE on September 26, 1984, Dunnville, Ont.
"And they shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Psalm 23:6b).

On September 21, 1984 the Lord took home our beloved brother, brother-in-law and uncle,

JOHN SUK

Mrs. Margaretha Emmelkamp-Suk — The Neth.
Mrs. Jantina Boelens-Suk — The Neth.
Mrs. Margrieta C. Suk-Jongman — Grimsby
Willy Suk-Kleer
Abel & Bertha van derLaan
Jan & Ankie Suk
Nick & Jane Veenhof
Peter & Jenny Suk
Tom & Ineke Suk
Gerald & Nell Korten
Louis & Margareth den Bak
We know that now he lives with his Redeemer, may the Lord bless and comfort tante Dirkje and her children.

The consistory and congregation of the Hebron Chr. Ref. Church of Renfrew wants to extend its Christian condolences to Mrs. J. Suk and family at the passing away of their husband and father,

Mr. J. SUK

That the Lord may strengthen them in their bereavement.

Personal

A lonely 37 year old male, seeks female companionship of Dutch Christian Reformed background. Desiring a relationship of a serious nature. Living in the Niagara Peninsula. Please reply to: Box #4831, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3

There must be a young fair looking lady out there who is still waiting for the right man of 47 years. Why not write me or something. Reply to Box #4829, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, On L2R 4L3

Christian widow 62 years, would like to correspond and meet with a sincere gentleman. Children welcome. Please reply Box #4833, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3

Watch for C.C.'s Annual Fall Book issue coming in November!

Personal

Het Consulaat Generaal zou gaarne in contact willen komen met de navolgende personen:
BRUINSMA, Jan, laatste woonplaats in Nederland Leeuwarden of Huizen in Friesland, naar Canada geemigreerd in de midden vijftiger jaren.
HALLEMA, Anne Pieter, geboren op 1 maart 1942 te Surabaja, laatstbekende woonplaats Rawdon, P.Q.
HOUTZAGER, Peter, geboren 1 maart 1942, laatstbekende adres: 8 Fairmount Crescent, Toronto.
HOWLETT geb. Sprengers, Maria, gehuwd met Sydney Charles Howlett, geboren op 15 november 1919 te Helmond, laatstbekende adres: 104-6919 Elbow Drive, Calgary, Alberta.
VAN LANDSVELD, Maria, geboren op 21 april 1953 te Veghel, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Gentsestraat 221, 's Gravenhage, naar Canada vertrokken op 18 mei 1982.
DE LANGEN, Johannes Cornelis, geboren op 18 oktober 1919 te Middelburg, naar Canada vertrokken in 1953.
VAN MAAR, F.D., laatstbekende adres: R.R.#4, Aylmer, Ont.
POSTEMA, Gerrit G., geboren op 21 juli 1924, laatstbekende woonplaats Dorval, P.Q., gehuwd met G.A. Kloeten.
REUSER, Gijsbert (Bert), geboren 2 januari 1949 in Tiel, laatstbekende woonplaats Brandon, Manitoba.
SMITS, Leo Frank, geboren op 16 oktober 1947, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: W. Barentszstraat 8, Utrecht, heeft zich waarschijnlijk in Toronto gevestigd.
TAYLOR geb. Reuser, Dineke, geboren op 21 juli 1947 te Tiel gehuwd met Eric Taylor, hebben 5 kinderen waarvan de oudste in ongeveer 1970 is geboren.
WILLEMS, Cornelis Johannes, geboren op 23 november 1919, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Gladiolensingel 35, Geleen, naar Canada vertrokken op 20 juli 1953.
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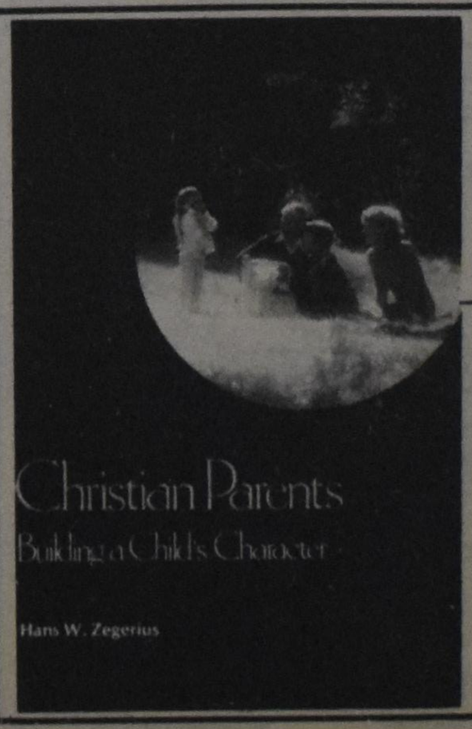

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Classifieds

For Sale

For Sale

2½ rank stately, oak house organ (not electric), used to stand in the Roman Catholic Church of Burford, Ont., in excellent condition. $500 or best offer. (416) 937-1239 (St. Catharines).

SMILE

Last week, one day, we were very busy with happy customers, (many specials on sale) and I was just writing an invoice for a house full of broadloom bought by a middle-aged couple, who were very pleased with the special deal, when a very distinguished lady walked in our office and said, "I lost my husband." I said: "I'm sorry to hear it." "No," she answered, "Not that way, but I cannot find him in your big building." Having so many customers walking around, I asked if she could describe him. "I think so," she said. "He is not tall, and not small, but he has a small face, wears glasses with a black trim, and has very big ears. I would say ... he looks like a Volkswagen with two open doors." "O.K." I said. "I'll go and look for him right away, don't worry." So I started on the main floor where the approximately 75 livingroom groupings, wall units, cocktail table sets, and dozens of different kinds of chairs are (no Volkswagen). Then I walked all the way to our Broadloom department with over 150 full, half bales, and end of bales, and the big assortment of vinyl flooring. (no Volkswagen). From there I checked the Waterbed Division, looked in all the beautiful waterbeds. (no Volkswagen). From there I went upstairs, looked in the big rooms where the Diningrooms are displayed, (admired by 4 couples) but no Volkswagen. Next big room full of kitchen sets (wood and chrome), unpainted furniture, mattresses, box springs, etc. etc. (no Volkswagen). Finally the big bedroom division and, yes, in the far corner, there I found a man sitting on a bed, admiring a beautiful oak bedroom suite, and this man certainly had big ears. (I found the Volkswagen). I said, "Can I help you?" "Yes," he said. "I love this bedroom, but you have the price only on your triple dresser. What is the price of the complete suite?" I said, "Sir, that is the price of the complete set, including the night tables." "Incredible," he said, "but I don't know where my wife is." I said, "Can you tell me what she looks like?" "Well," he replied with shining eyes, "my wife is a very very classic looking lady and she is wearing a dark blue suit, ah — I would she looks like a Rolls royce. Yes, very classic!" So I went down stairs and brought the lady to her husband, and after they decided to take the Bedroom suite. I showed them a Classic Restonic Waterbed (because she had a bit of arthritis) and I am sure that Mr. Volkswagen, and Mrs. Rolls Royce (not their real names), will sleep happily ever after.

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7 acres, large brick home, comb. oil and wood furnace. Garage. Cement block building. On paved road.

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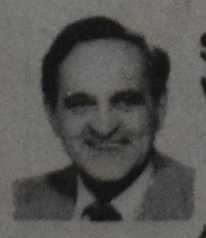

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Apartment for Rent

BURLINGTON: One bedroom apartment in four-plex, $330.00 monthly, close to hospital. Available Nov. 1. Phone evenings: 632-5415.

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Custodian required for New Bethany CRC in Fenwick. Contact H. Fennema, 892-2519 or C. Gritter 892-5639; Post Office, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0

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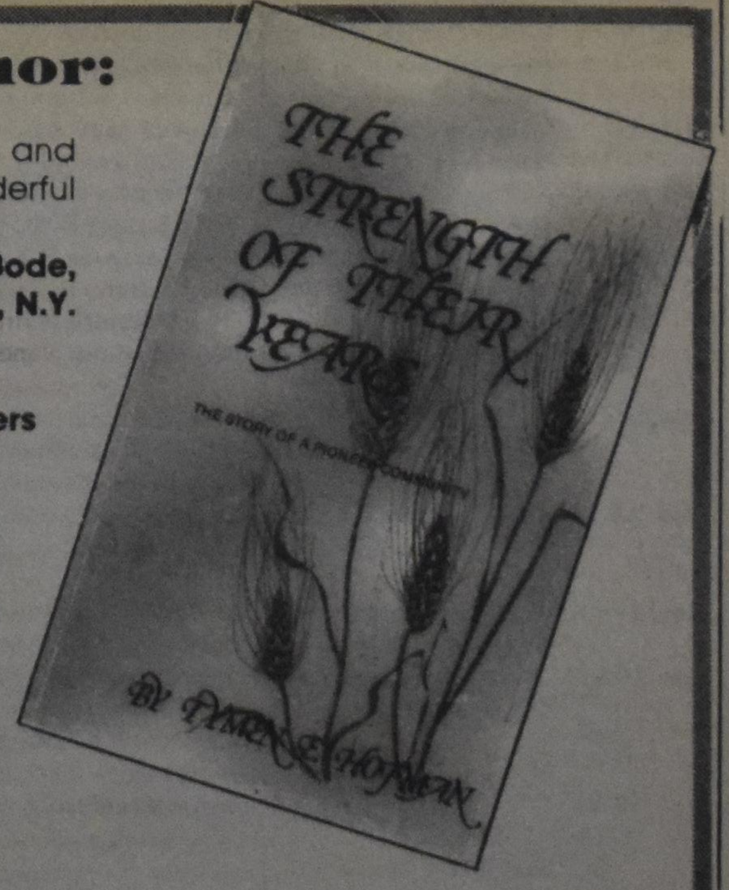

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Events

CALENDAR of events

Tour John W. Vandertuin: Organist John W. Vandertuin has been engaged to tour the Atlantic Provinces under the auspices of "Debut Atlantic" in co-operation with the Canada Council and the C.B.C. at the following locations: Oct. 17. St. Bernard's Church, Church Point, **Nova Scotia;** Oct. 19: The Stone Church, Saint John, **New Brunswick;** Oct. 21: The Congregational Church, Calais, **Maine,** USA; Oct. 23: St. Simon and St. Jude, Tignish, **P.E.I.;** Oct. 25: St. Francis Xavier University, St. Ninian's Church, Antigonish, **N.S.**

Oct. 10-20 H. Houtman of CSS in **Saskatchewan** and **Alberta.**

Oct. 10 Fally Rally CRC Ladies' Societies at 10:00 a.m. in the **Dundas** CRC. Speakers: a.m. Rev. Ralph Koops on "Living Christians in a Dying Civilization," p.m. Dr. Moncrieff of Salem Counselling on "Stress in the Family."

Oct. 11 Special "Afscheiding" service commemorated by The Dutch-American Historical Commission. Fine Arts Center, Calvin College, **Grand Rapids,** 8:00 p.m.

Oct. 12 St. Thomas and District Male Choir "Crescendo" 8 p.m., Walton United Church, **Walton,** Ont.

Oct. 14 St. Thomas and District Male Choir and St. Thomas Ladies Choir "Gloria in Excelsis", 2 p.m., Community Hall, **Mount Elgin,** Ont.

Oct. 14 Commemorative Service at **Springdale** CRC at 4:30 p.m. in remembrance of the Hurricane Hazel - caused flooding of Holland Marsh on October 15, 1954.

Oct. 19 The 80-member male chorus "Lofzang Heerde" from Heerde, The Netherlands, presents a concert at 8:00 p.m. in the Covenant CRC, **St. Catharines,** Ont.

Oct. 19 AODC celebration of Thanksgiving, Second CRC, **Brampton,** Ont. at 8:00 p.m.

Oct. 19 Official opening and dedication ceremony of new gymnasium addition and student lounge at Quinte Christian High School, **Belleville,** at 8:00 p.m. (289 Pinnacle Street).

Oct. 20 AODC annual meeting, John Knox Christian School, **Brampton,** Ont., at 9:00 a.m.

Oct. 20 "Who Owes Me a Job?" — The Christian Labour Association of Canada will discuss the questions of who is responsible for creating jobs and how jobs are created. Main speakers will be Bernard Zylstra and Dirk de Vos. Registration at 9:00 a.m. at Toronto District Christian High School, **Woodbridge.**

Oct. 25 Fall Rally held at Bethel CRC, **London,** Ont. from 10 a.m. - ? Bring a lunch, ladies, and wear a name tag please.

Oct. 27 Professor Jan Overduin (renowned organist) will be in concert at 8:00 p.m. at the First CRC, **Sarnia** (corner of Exmouth and Murphy). A celebration of the church's 50th Anniversary year.

Oct. 27 Back to God Hour Rally in the Mount Hamilton CRC (1411 Upper Wellington St.), **Hamilton** at 8:00 p.m. Speaker: Dr. Joel Nederhood on theme "Discovery."

Oct. 27 **Grimsby's** Trinity Christian School's Annual Bazaar. Fashion Show at 11:00 a.m. Bazaar doors open at noon.

Oct. 28 St. Thomas and District Male Choir, 7:30 p.m., United Church, **Dutton,** Ont.

Oct. 28 Reformation Day Rally at Saunders Secondary School, **London,** at 7:00 p.m. with Rev. Dr. Henry J. Boekhoven speaking. Music by Brass Instruments; The London District Christian Secondary School Choir augmented by Choirs from several elementary Christian Schools.

Nov. 2 Organ Recital by Chris Teeuwsen. Fri. night in St. Thomas Anglican Church (99 Ontario St.), **St. Catharines** at 8:15 p.m. Admission: $4.00 pp.; $3.00 Sen. Cit. and children.

Nov. 2 & 3 1984 All Ontario Fall Rally for all Cadet and Calvinette Counsellors: Sheraton Brock in **Niagara Falls.** Theme: "Christ our Foundation.

Nov. 3 Organ Concert with Andre Knevel at Calvin Chr. Ref. Church of **Dundas** at 8:00 p.m. (Note: Rescheduled from Sept. 22!)

Nov. 10&11 25th Anniversary celebration of Immanuel, CRC, **Hamilton,** Ont. The celebrations include a banquet on Sat., Nov. 10, and a special service of praise on Sun., Nov. 11, at 3:00 p.m. in the Mohawk College Auditorium.

Nov. 12-24 C.S.S. H. Houtman in **Edmonton, Neerlandia,** etc.

Nov. 16-18 "Good News '84" Young Adults fall retreat weekend, Camp Shalom. For info. write or call: Christian Communications Centre, 1735 Chalkdene Grove, Mississauga, ON L4W 2C2; tel. (416) 625-2262.

Dec. 27-30 1984 Conference for Christian Young Adults, **Chicago,** IL.

Next Issue

Dated	Mailed	Deadline for classified ads	Deadline for other advertising
Fri.Oct.19	Tues.Oct.16	Wed.Oct.10-8:30a.m.	Wed.Oct.10-8:30a.m.
Fri.Oct.26	Tues.Oct.23	Thurs.Oct.18-8:30a.m.	Wed.Oct.17-8:30a.m.
Fri.Nov.2	Tues.Oct.30	Thurs.Oct.25-8:30a.m.	Wed.Oct.24-8:30a.m.

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Fiction

Sad but insightful look at war- torn lives

If You Love Me, by Patricia St. John, Moody Press; 175 pp. Berta Hosmar, Whitby, Ont.

This story is set in modern Lebanon, a land tragically affected by events in neighbouring Palestine.

For many years the people of Lebanon were divided into two communities of almost equal size, half Christian, half Muslim, who had lived peacefully together.

But the bitter conflict between Israel and the Palestinians spilled over into Lebanon. Refugee camps were set up by the United Nations and in 1958 fighting broke out between the two parties, "Christian" and "Muslim" which led to a civil war.

This story describes the love-affair of two young people who are cruelly separated by the war. The girl, Lamia, cannot forgive a former friend who has betrayed her brother, which has led to the brother's death. Years of her life are spent trying to get revenge, and only her love for a small boy who is found alive under his mother's dead body, and who is adopted by Lania, keeps her from becoming a hateful, bitter young woman.

Her family's property is destroyed by bombs and her mother gets killed and the family has to flee to safer places time and again. Later her boyfriend becomes a Christian and teaches Lania that to forgive is Christlike and that she can give her burden of guilt and hate away and leave it at the cross.

This is a rather sad book, so much grief happens to the main characters, yet it gives a clear insight into the lives of people who live in war-torn countries. We read about this in the newspapers, but this story brings it home to us in a very vivid way. Recommended.

Organ Concert

presented by

Chris Teeuwsen

November 2 — 8:15 p.m.

St. Thomas Anglican Church

99 Ontario St., St. Catharines

Works by: Buxtehude, Pachelbel, Bach, Walther, Liszt, Dupré.

Admission: $4.00 Seniors & children (under 12) $3.00

Let's Play CHESS

Pete Layer

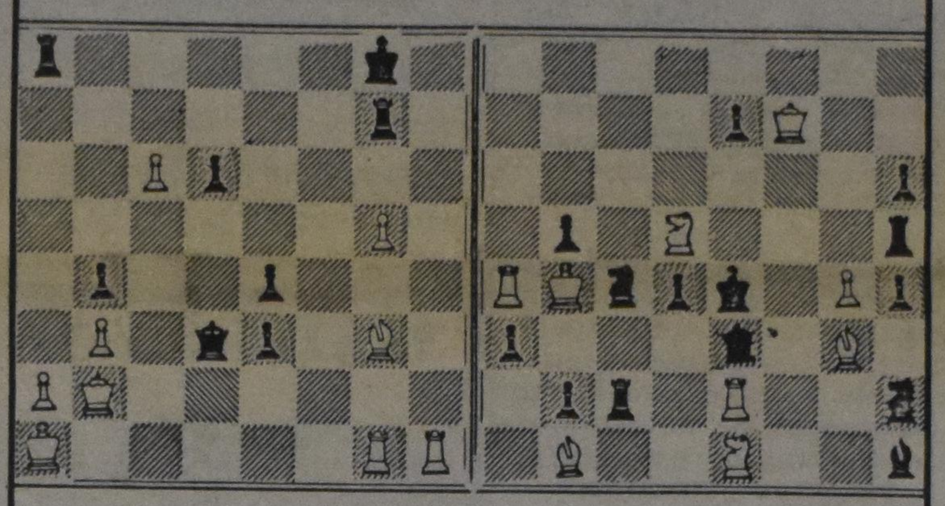
FIRST SERIES OF PROBLEMS IN OCTOBER

#1020
Game Position

8

#1021
K. Larsen,
England, 1920

14



9 3 pts.

Black to play, rescues himself

9
2-mover 2 pts.
White to play and mate in 2

Notes

1. The game position, #1020, shows White with a bishop ahead. Black has one last chance to draw or win the game. How did he manage to do it? Please give the full solution.
2. The two-mover is tricky with more pins than you think at first sight. Please give the key and threat, if any.
3. The deadline will appear with next week's problems.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

1. Title of Publication: Calvinist Contact; Publication No. 518090; 2. Date of Filing: October 5, 1984; 3. Frequency of Issue: Weekly; A. No. of Issues Published Annually: 47; B. Annual Subscription Price: $22.50; 4. Location of Known Office of Publication: 411 Center St., Lewiston, NY 14092. 5. Location of the Headquarters or General Business Offices of the Publisher: 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3; 6. Publisher: Stan De Jong, Editor: Bert Witvoet; 7. Owner: Knight Publishing Limited, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3; 8. Nature and Extent of Circulation:

	Average No. Copies each issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. of Single Issue Published Nearest To Filing Date
A. Total No. Copies Printed (Net press run)	8000	7800
B. Paid Circulation		
1. Sales through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales	0	0
2. Mail Subscriptions	7785	7536
C. Total Paid Circulation	7785	7536
D. Free Distribution by Mail, Carrier or Other Means; Samples, Complimentary, and Other Free Copies	98	183
E. Total Distribution (Sum of C and D)	7883	7719
F. Copies Not Distributed		
1. Office Use, Left Over, Unaccounted, Spoiled After Printing	117	81
2. Returns from News Agents	0	0
G. Total (Sum of E.F. 1 and 2 — should equal net press run shown in A)	8000	7800

H. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

Stan De Jong, publisher

Campaign problems

Marian Van Til

TORONTO, Ont. — Harry Antonides, director of the Work Research Foundation, an arm of the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), says that real communication during the recent federal political campaign was replaced by "slick advertising campaigns and clever debating tricks."

Antonides is troubled that this was so, and believes it should concern anyone who realizes that there are "issues of immense importance" at stake which the media did not confront.

He sees four problem areas: the distorting, trivializing role of the media, the attempts by politicians to cater to special interest groups, the reduction of all political issues to matters of economic policy, and the parties' "winning is everything" attitude which has replaced principles.

Nearly all emphasis is placed on economic and social welfare concerns in contemporary election campaigns, according to Antonides. "Virtually no attention was paid in this last election to the underlying legal, institutional basis of a just political order, nor to the requirements of an adequate defence ...," he asserts in a recent bulletin of the Work Research Foundation.

Dutch

Een kleine botsing met grote gevolgen

De afscheiding 1834-1984

H. Van Andel

Op 14 October a.s. hopen we als Gereformeerden op verschillende plaatsen in de wereld te gedenken hoe 150 jaar geleden de "Afscheiding van 1834" in Nederland heeft plaats gevonden. Verschillende kerken over de aardbol verspreid, die de naam "Gereformeerd" dragen, vinden in deze Afscheiding hun oorsprong. Het is daarom goed dat we onze aandacht schenken, niet alleen aan dit historisch gebeuren, maar ook aan de invloed, die het in de kerk van Christus heeft gehad.

De donkere achtergrond

De Afscheiding is alleen te verstaan tegen de donkere achtergrond van een verworden kerkelijk leven, zowel in Nederland als daarbuiten. In de loop van de 18e eeuw onderging ook Nederland de sterke invloed van de zogenaamde "Verlichting," de cultuurbeweging, die een paar honderd jaar na de Hervorming Europa bezielde.

Het was de tijd, waarin het geloof in God's Openbaring werd vervangen door de souvereiniteit van de rede. Terwijl oude termen vaak gehandhaafd bleven leerde men toch dat de mens van nature goed was, dat de waarheid resultaat was van onderzoek en dat de cultuur verlossing bracht.

In de theologie deed de vrijzinnigheid haar intree. Men wilde niet meer zo bekrompen zijn als de Dordse Vaderen. Zonde heette onvolkomenheid, Christus werd verkondigd als een zedeleraar, verlossing werd verlichting, geloof veranderde in verstandsovertuiging, bekering werd verbetering.

Daar kwam nog iets bij. Na de val van Napoleon was er op staatkundig terrein een nieuwe tijd in Nederland aangebroken. Willem I werd koning. Deze koning was sterk ingenomen met de Duitse kerkinrichting, waarbij staat en kerk gekoppeld waren. Hij wenste een dergelijk stelsel ook in Nederland in te voeren en benoemde daartoe een commissie onder leiding van de minister van eredienst.

Deze commissie stelde op een Algemeen Reglement voor het Bestuur van de Hervormde Kerk in Nederland. In Januari 1816 werd dit Reglement aanvaard. Het betekende dat de kerk niet meer bestuurd werd door de ambtsdragers van plaatselijke kerken, die van onder op bij afvaardiging een Synode vormden, maar dat de kerk een genootschap werd, geregeerd door een benoemde Synode met vaste regelingen.

Eén der eerste aangenomen regelingen was dat candidaten, die toegang tot het ambt van predikant vroegen, alleen maar behoefden te onderteken dat zij instemden met de Formulieren van Enigheid, *voor zover* die overeenstemden met Gods Woord.

Vroege Reacties

Er waren een paar classicale vergaderingen, die protesteerden tegen deze gang van zaken, maar verder werd de nieuwe orde in de kerk algemeen aanvaard. Desondanks waren er met name onder het eenvoudige volk velen, die in leer en leven trouw bleven aan de oude waarheid. Zij trokken zich uit het kerkelijk leven terug en kwamen samen in zogenaamde conventikels of gezelschappen waar preken van "oude schrijvers" werden gelezen en bij de open Statenbijbel in persoonlijk gesprek werd getuigd over geloof en bekering. Deze samenkomsten droegen meestal een wat piëtistisch karakter, maar waren niettemin een bewijs dat God in tijden van afval een "overblijfsel" bewaart, dat Hem op rechte wijze blijft dienen.

Er klonken ook enkele meer officiele stemmen, die opkwamen voor de handhaving van God's Woord als enige richtsnoer voor geloof en leven. In 1819 publiceerde Ds. Nicolaas Schotsman te Leiden een geschrift getiteld: "Erezuil ter nagedachtenis van de te Dordrecht gehouden Nationale Synode." Een andere predikant, Ds. Dirk Molenaar, zond een "Adres aan alle mijne geloofsgenoten," waarin hij de nieuwe kerkelijke organizatie van 1816 scherp afkeurde.

Maar het krachtigst getuigenis ging uit van het zogenaamd "Reveil." Het Reveil was een internationale beweging, die in Genève haar oorsprong vond. De vader van het Nederlandse Reveil was Willem Bilderdijk. Deze vormde in Leiden een kring van studenten, die antithetisch stond tegenover de geest des tijds, welke openbaar werd in rationalisme, pelagianisme en moralisme in het kerkelijk leven.

In deze kring werd van uit de Bijbelse verzoeningsgedachte een door de Heilige Geest vernieuwd leven gepropageerd.

Tot de kring van Bilderdijk behoorde de bekeerde Jood Isaac Da Costa, die het land in opschudding bracht met zijn boekje: "Bezwaren tegen de geest der eeuw." Da Costa zelf vormde een eigen kring van studenten, waarvan Brummelkamp, Scholte en Van Raalte lid waren, mannen, die later een rol in de Afscheiding hebben gespeeld.

Hendrick De Cock

De man, die God heeft gebruikt voor kerkelijke reformatie was Hendrick De Cock. Hij was geboren in 1801 te Veendam uit liberaal gezinde ouders. Zijn kerkelijke opvoeding was ook vrijzinnig, hoewel één van zijn catechiseermeesters hem voorhield, dat God alleen kan gediend worden langs de

Vervolg op pagina 18 ..

Als je't mij vraagt

Syrt Wolters

Wat denk je: moet de Bijbel weer op de openbare school?

Bij het antwoord op die vraag heb ik mijn nek eens lelijk "uitgestoken". Zo zeggen we dat in het Engels, niet waar? You "stick your neck out."

Jaren terug toen in de Verenigde Staten onder druk van z.g.n. atheisten de Bijbel niet meer tot het voorgeschreven leerplan vereist werd, hoorden we heel wat stemmen die zeiden: Nou gaat Amerika er aan. Geen Bijbel meer op de openbare school. Ingezonden stukken in allerlei kranten mengden zich in het debat.

Toen heb ik ook een brief naar de krant geschreven. Ik schreef toen dat het langzamerhand tijd werd dat de openbare school een duidelijke keus moest doen: Of de Schrift aanvaarden als de basis van het hele leerprogramma of. als de openbare chool dat niet wilde, de Bijbel dan maar uit de school nemen.

Er staat nog steeds geschreven: Gij zult de Naam des Heren niet ijdel gebruiken. Ik geloof niet dat dat alleen slaat op het gebruik van de eigen namen van God, zoals die in de Bijbel voorkomen. Het slaat op alles waardoor wij Hem kennen en daar valt de hele Bijbel ook onder.

Een onderwijssysteem dat niets met het gezag van God en Zijn Woord te maken wil hebben in het algemene leerplan, moet de Bijbel en het gebed er ook maar uitlaten.

Met die brief heb ik wel mijn hand in een wespennest gestoken. Er kwámen zelfs brieven op de kerkeraad waarin men eiste dat ik onder censuur gezet moest worden! Hoe durfde ik, als Christen, zoiets grofs in de krant te laten zetten!

Bijbellezen op een openbare school zie ik niet anders dan een overtreding van het derde gebod. Denkt u dat het God behaagt als een onderwijzer(es) de school dag begint met bijbellezen en gebed en daarna overgaat naar leerstof dat God en Zijn Woord totaal negeert? Het doet mij denken aan een gebed om zegen over een zonde die we van plan zijn te bedrijven.

Ik weet wel dat de Christenen, die menen op de openbare school nog van nut te kunnen zijn, het zo helemaal niet zien. Maar ik geloof wel dat ze zich ernstig op de vraag moeten bezinnen of God van hen vraagt om te getuigen op de termen van een school die officieel kiest

Vervolg op pagina 19 ...

Uw Canadese Strijdkrachten

Canada is nooit een vechtlustig militair land geweest.

Toch, als er een beroep op hen gedaan werd, hebben de mannelijke en vrouwelijke vrijwilligers van het Canadese leger hun taak met onbaatzuchtige toewijding aan hun plicht, uitgevoerd. In het tegenwoordige leger worden de ervaringen en gewoonten van het verleden gebruikt om aan de vragen en eisen van de toekomst tegemoet te komen.

De Canadese strijdkrachten zijn verantwoordelijk voor het toezicht en de bescherming van het Canadese grondgebied, de verdediging van Noord-Amerika door middel van NORAD, het vervullen van hun verplichtingen bij de NATO en hun rol in de internationale vredeshandhaving.

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Een kleine botsing met grote gevolgen

De afscheiding 1834-1984

... vervolg van pagina 17

weg van wedergeboorte en bekering. Hij studeerde theologie aan de Groningse Universiteit en werd op 23 jarige leeftijd predikant, na gehuwd te zijn met Frouwe Venema. Zijn derde standplaats was Ulrum. Volgens de levensbeschrijving, die zijn zoon Prof. Helenius De Cock heeft gegeven, was tot zo lang de ware kennis van het Evangelie voor hem verborgen.

Deze ware kennis werd hem bijgebracht door een gemeentelid, Klaas Pieters Kuipenga. Deze trouwe kerkganger, die tot op latere leeftijd geen belijdenis had durven doen, kwam wekelijks bij zijn dominee op huiscatechisatie. Het bleek echter dat de dominee meer leerde van de catechisant dan omgekeerd. Kuipenga zei een woord, dat De Cock maar niet kwijt kon raken. Hij zei: "Indien ik ook maar een zucht tot mij zaligheid moest toebrengen, dan was ik voor eeuwig verloren."

Met dit woord wist De Cock geen weg — totdat hij in de bibliotheek van een van zijn collega's de Institutie van Calvijn vond. De lezing daarvan leerde hem verstaan wat Kuipenga bedoelde. Deze wetenschap bracht een volkomen omkeer te weeg in zijn persoonlijk leven en ook in zijn prediking.

Het leek wel alsof velen in de gemeente van Ulrum erop hadden gewacht. En ook velen uit de omtrek. Het volk stroomde toe.

De pastorie naast de kerk van Ulrum waar de familie De Cock heeft gewoond

Het Conflict

De invloed van De Cock stuitte spoedig op verzet. Vooral nadat hij enkele publicaties had doen verschijnen, o.a. het van ouds bekende, maar totaal vergeten "Kort Begrip der Christelijke Religie," als ook de "Dordse Leerregels," die hij — dank zij een gemeentelid — nu pas ontdekte. Het verzet kwam eerst van twee vrijzinnige predikanten in de buurt, die beiden een brochure schreven, waarin De Cock een scheurmaker en misleider der schare werd genoemd. In een tegenbrochure noemde De Cock deze predikanten wolven in de schaapskooi van Christus.

Het Classicaal Bestuur riep De Cock tot verantwoording. Hij werd aangeklaagd niet alleen wegens de inhoud van zijn geschriften, maar ook omdat hij kinderen van ouders uit andere gemeenten had gedoopt. Dat laatste was minder juist, hoewel er geen regel voor bestond. Het Classicaal Bestuur gaf De Cock niet veel gelegenheid tot verweer, maar besloot hem te schorsen in alle delen van zijn dienst totdat hij de veroordeling van zijn collega's zou hebben herroepen.

De Cock onderwierp zich aan de schorsing, maar hij zette de strijd voort door zich te beroepen op het Provinciaal Kerkbestuur. Bovendien richtte hij een adres tot Koning Willem I. Wat zijn zaak allerminst diende was het feit dat hij een inleiding schreef voor een minder fraai boekje, dat gericht was tegen de gezangen. Dat alles leidde ertoe dat het Provinciaal Kerkbestuur hem schorste voor de tijd van twee jaar met verlies van tractement en betaling van de onkosten der kerkelijke procedure. Dat geschiedde op 1 April 1833.

De Cock maakte nu een reis naar den Haag met een officieel adres van de kerkeraad aan de koning. Toen hij terugkwam werd hij echter in Mei 1934 uit zijn ambt ontzet. Een beroep op de Generale Synode had voor hem geen gunstig resultaat.

De Afscheiding

In begin October 1834 bezocht Ds. H.P. Scholte van Genderen de Cock in Ulrum. Hij was een van de Cock's warme medestanders. Op verzoek van de kerkeraad preekte hij op een Vrijdagavond. Hoewel de kerkeraad een verzoek deed aan de consulent de beurten op de Zondag aan Scholte af te staan, werd dit geweigerd. Omdat men verwachtte dat Scholte zou preken, was de kerk stampvol. Toen een dringend verzoek om de middagbeurt aan Scholte af te staan ook geweigerd was werd op een weiland achter de pastorie een hagepreek gehouden door Scholte geleid. Scholte preekte over de levende weg naar het heiligdom uit Hebreeën 10:19-22.

Ongetwijfeld hebben Scholte en De Cock die dag gesproken over de noodzakelijkheid van afscheiding. De Cock, die oorspronkelijk die gedachte had verworpen, was overtuigd dat nu de tijd gekomen was. Zijn kerkeraad stond achter hem. En zo is het gebeurd dat op een kerkeraadsvergadering van 13 October de Acte van Afscheiding en Wederkeer werd opgesteld, die op Dinsdag 14 October aan een gemeentevergadering werd voorgelegd. De acte werd daar aanvaard en door 144 belijdende leden ondertekend. In het notulenboek van de kerkeraad werd nog dezelfde avond vastgelegd:

"Dinsdagavond 14 October hebben wij, na biddend en knielend opzien tot den Heere, ons afgescheiden van de valsche kerk en in de mogendheden des Heeren het ambt aller gelovigen aangenomen, hetwelk Hij, de Heere, de Almachtige, de Eenige en Drieeënige God bevestige. Met psalmgezang en gebed is de plechtigheid gesloten."

De gevolgen

De gevolgen van deze daad waren van tweeërlei aard. Van de zijde van de Overheid, die geheel achter het Hervormde Genootschap stond, kwam er een discriminatie, die met vervolging gelijk stond.

Overheids maatregelen begonnen de eerste Zondag na 14 October. Toen De Cock voor zijn afgescheiden gemeente in de kerk wilde preken stond er een politie aan de voet van de preekstoel, die hem de toegang weigerde. Nadat de kerkgangers luide hadden verklaard dat zij hun eigen predikant wensten te horen, preekte De Cock staande op een bank. Om verdere conflikten te voorkomen kwam men 's middags samen in een schuur bij de pastorie, waar De Cock preekte vanaf een boerenwagen.

Onder het voorwendsel dat de orde in Ulrum moest worden gehandhaafd werd een detachement soldaten bij burgers ingekwartierd. Twaalf soldaten werden in de pastorie geplaatst, De Cock en zijn vrouw kregen kamer arrest en op alle correspondentie werd beslag gelegd. Op 31 October werd De Cock wegens het stichten van wanorde in de bovengenoemde dienst veroordeeld tot drie maanden gevangenisstraf en 150 gulden boete.

Na zijn gevangenschap bleek dat hij in Ulrum's pastorie niet kon terugkeren. Hij werd predikant van de afgescheiden gemeenten in Groningen en Drente en vestigde zich in Smilde. Vandaar uit heeft hij gedurende zeven jaren gepredikt en leiding gegeven aan de afgescheiden kerken, die overal in het land verspreid waren. Het heeft zijn krachten gesloopt want in September 1941 is hij op 41-jarige leeftijd overleden.

Ondertussen bleek dat andere predíkanten zijn voorbeeld hadden gevolgd. We noemden reeds de naam van Scholte, die ook werd afgezet en die vooral bekend is geworden omdat hij later emigreerde naar Amerika (Pella). Andere namen zijn Brummelkamp, Gezelle Meerburg. Van Raalte (ook bekend om zijn vertrek naar Amerika, Michigan), van Velzen, Buddingh, Ledeboer. In het voorjaar van 1835 werd reeds een vergadering gehouden met afgevaardigden van 16 gemeenten en in Maart 1836 werd te Amsterdam de eerste Synode gehouden. De naam van de nieuw gestichte kerk was toen "De Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerk onder het Kruis."

De verreikende invloed

Aanvankelijk leek het alsof de Afscheiding weinig betekende op het brede kerkelijk erf. De groep was klein en werd van officiële zijde in haar ontwikkeling zeer bemoeilijkt. De vervolging duurde meer dan 5 jaar tot in 1840 Willem II aan de regering kwam.

Bovendien vertoonden de Afgescheidenen allesbehalve een eenheid. Scholte en De Cock verschilden in opvatting op allerlei punten. Andere predikanten als Buddingh en Ledeboer hadden een uitgesproken piëtistische zienswijze. Ze vormden zelfstandige vrije gemeenten. Zelfs was er een afscheiding van de Afscheiding en werd in 1841 een afzonderlijke groep gevormd, die zich noemde "De Verenigde Gereformeerden onder het kruis." Toch werd er altijd weer samen vergaderd om biddend de geschillen op te lossen. Mede dank zij de oprichting van de Theologische Opleidings School in Kampen is er toch een eenheid gegroeid. Deze kwam in 1869 tot stand toen men zich verenigde onder de naam "Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerk."

Ondanks dit alles heeft toch de Afscheiding een verreikende invloed gehad. Allereerst door de herontdekking en publicatie van wat De Cock noemde de ware Gereformeerde leer. Zoals we reeds zagen zorgde hij, tegelijk met andere geschriften, voor een heruitgave van de Dordse Leerregels en het Kort Begrip.

Door dit alles is in de loop van de 19e eeuw een groot deel van kerkelijk Nederland voor vrijzinnigheid bewaard gebleven. Dit is duidelijk gebleken toen in 1886 de Doleantie plaats vond. Men kan die twee, Afscheiding en Doleantie niet scheiden, al was er een verschil in accent. In hoever de Afscheiding een voorbereiding voor de Doleantie is geweest is moeilijk te zeggen, maar zeker is dat de Doleantie de vruchten heeft geplukt, die de Afscheiding in de Hervormde Kerk had achtergelaten.

En verder mogen we vooral niet vergeten de verreikende invloed, die de Afscheiding in Amerika heeft gehad. Toen in 1846 Holland gebukt ging onder een zware economische crisis zijn Van Raalte en Scholte met grote groepen van emigranten de Oceaan overgestoken. Wat zij bereikt hebben in onontgonnen gebieden in Michigan en Iowa grenst aan het ongelooflijke.

Natuurlijk heeft de komst van latere emigranten ook na de Doleantie meegewerkt aan de kerkelijke en maatschappelijke resultaten die thans zijn waar te nemen. Maar de Christian Reformed Church in Amerika is altijd heel sterk het stempel van de Afscheiding blijven vertonen. Bovendien heeft de wijze waarop deze kerk zich heeft uitgebreid de zaak van het Calvinisme in Amerika belangrijk bevorderd.

Het is tragisch dat in de geschiedenis der Christelijke Kerk de deformatie altijd weer terugkeert. In onze dagen is in Holland de achteruitgang onweersprekelijk. In Calvinistisch Noord Amerika zijn er velen die vrezen dat ook hier de invloed van het Liberalisme zich weer zal laten gelden.

Het is hier niet de plaats om daar op in te gaan. Maar wel mag worden gezegd, dat God in tijden van doorgaande deformatie altijd een reformerende kern bewaart. Dat heeft de geschiedenis van de kerk meermalen bewezen, ook in de Afscheiding.

Het is de vervulling van Christus' belofte dat de poorten der hel zijn gemeente niet zullen overweldigen.

Ds. Van Andel is emeritus predikant. Hij woont in Burnaby, BC

Wat denk je: moet de Bijbel weer op de openbare school?

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tegen het koningschap van Christus. Moeten we getuigen op de termen van de wereld of op de termen van het Koninkrijk Gods?

Al dat geredeneer dat men bij ervaring weet dat men tot zegen geweest is voor sommigen, is pragmatisch geredeneer. Dat is natuurlijk best mogelijk. Evenals het mogelijk is en soms ook gebeurt dat een ongelovige echtgenoot bekeerd wordt door zijn haar gelovige partner. We mogen God niet binden aan wat naar onze redenering alzo mogelijk is.

God slaat wel eens vaker een rechte slag met een kromme stok, maar dat geeft ons niet het recht om voor "kromme stok" te spelen. Als het er op aan komt heeft God ons helemaal niet nodig.

Hij roept ons op om bij alles wat we doen en bij elke beslissing die we nemen en elke keus die we maken, moeten handelen in overeenstemming met het liefde gebod, die de samenvatting is van de Tien Geboden. De Here vraagt van ons dat we in het leven als "gemeenschap der heiligen" één lijn trekken tegenover de wereld, zodat de wereld "zien" kan, wat het betekent tot die "gemeenschap" te behoren.

Dat wil natuurlijk niet zeggen dat we alles precies gelijk doen. We houden onze geaardheid.

Maar ik dwaal af. De vraag of de Bijbel weer op de openbare school moet, is eigenlijk overbodig. Tenminste het behoort overbodig te zijn in onze kringen. Want eigenlijk moest er helemaal geen openbare school zijn!

We geloven immers dat onderwijs de taak is van de ouders! Niet alleen van Christelijke ouders, maar evengoed van andere ouders. Het publiek gaat buiten zijn boekje door van de overheid iets te vragen wat niet tot de taak van de overheid behoort.

In plaats van ons druk te maken over de vraag of de Bijbel thuis hoort op de openbare school moesten we ons meer inzetten om de gemeenschap er van te overtuigen dat onderwijs de taak is van de ouders en niet van de overheid. (Ik verwacht niet dat er weer een brief naar de kerkeraad gestuurd wordt met de eis om me onder censuur te zetten. De kerken zijn niet meer zo censuurachtig, het zij tengoede of ten kwade).

Syrt Wolters heeft een kappersbedrijf in het Empress Hotel te Victoria, BC

Ze lijken precies gelijk, maar als het op verwarmingskosten aankomt dan is er geen vergelijking.

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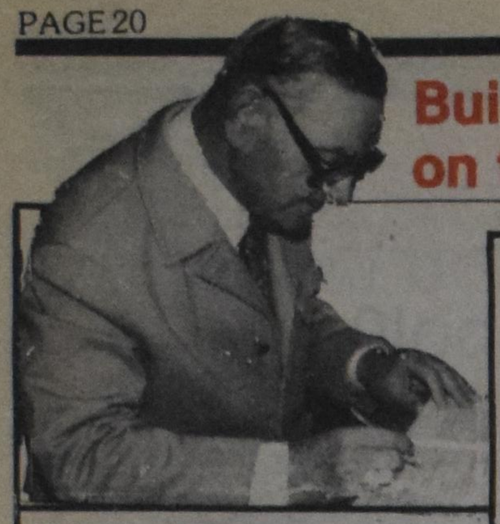

Building on the rock

The Kingdom

Thy Kingdom come.
Matthew 6:10a

Before the fall the Kingdom of God embraced heaven and earth and all that was therein. The constitution of this Kingdom was: God all in all. It was a Kingdom of love.

However, Satan rebelled against God and he invaded the earth. He seduced man who was in charge as lord of the earth. In that way the earth become a by-Satan-occupied territory. Therefore, Satan was also called the prince of this world. The Kingdom of God withdrew to heaven.

God did not want the earth to remain a territory which was occupied by Satan. Therefore He chose Israel as His covenant people and sent His Son Jesus Christ to the earth in order to conquer Satan and to reclaim man and His world for the Kingdom of God.

When Christ came, John the Baptist, His herald, announced His mission. He said: "The Kingdom of God is at hand."

Christ succeeded in His victory over Satan. He defeated him. However, by conquering him, the human race and this world was not yet brought back and reunited with God's Kingdom. What was necessary was the process of an "Anschlusz."

For this purpose Christ sent His disciples into the world. He appointed them as apostles and established through them His Church as an army of believers in order to reconquer the occupied territory.

The final result will be that unwilling sinners will be consumed from the earth and that all believers with the whole earth will be reunited with heaven. The original Kingdom of God will be restored. God will be "all in all" again.

We can say that the Kingdom of God *is* already on earth and also that it has to *come*. We pray therefore: Thy Kingdom come.

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